TYPEWRITER TERMITES

by JOHN STUART

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NEW MASSES

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WHICH WAY UNO?

See page 19

FOUR BROTHERS AND YOU

by HOWARD FAST

REPORT ON KOREA

by RALPH IZARD

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

A Day at the Shop, a short story by Charles Humboldt; Pay Envelopes and Prices, by Thomas Gannon; The Creative Role of Marxism, by Ralph Bowman; Joseph North reviews Sayers' and Kahn's "The Great Conspiracy"; Remembering H. Glintenkamp; Mourning Becomes O'Neill, by Isidor Schneider.

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

THE four faces you see here have shown up in class this week — at Hunter College, where they have enrolled as observers in the vital UNO laboratory course in Current History. This class has no instructor, except History itself; it asks hard, blunt questions and the penalty for flunking them is death—death for millions of the people all over the world who are taking the course only by correspondence.

NM is happy to be able to offer the impressions and analyses of these four—who are, from top to bottom, Richard Boyer, Howard Fast, Joseph North and John Stuart—on UNO's Security Council sessions. Boyer and Fast will report in next week's issue; North and Stuart subsequently. All four have been going around the office with little blue buttons in their lapels on which appears a small picture of the globe, seen from the North Pole, and, in gold lettering, the words "United Nations—*Nations Unies.*" Let us hope that when the sessions are over some of the Churchillian polar winds now sweeping over the world will have been dissipated—and that the Nations will be a trifle nearer to being *Unies.*

B. M.

NEW MASSES
ESTABLISHED 1911

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NEW MASSES

VOL. LIX APRIL 2, 1946 NO. 1

Spring Sowing.

REPORT ON KOREA

By RALPH IZARD

KOREA is a prime Soviet-American tension point today because the announced policies of the US State Department are not those followed by military leaders on the strategic peninsula where armies of the two countries face each other across the 38th parallel of North latitude—the line dividing the American from the Soviet zone of occupation.

The United States is a signatory to the Moscow agreement which charts a democratic course for the Korean people, but this has resulted in no change in the dangerous anti-democratic maneuvers undertaken by Lt. Gen. John R. Hodge, commander of US Armed Forces in Korea. The general continues to use, and be used by, a small group of Koreans who are distinguished only for their past enthusiasm for Japanese rule. This clique completely dominates the South Korean Representative Democratic Council—it is neither representative nor democratic—which the general created as the American instrument for cooperation with the Korean government in the Soviet zone to the North.

But at this juncture his continued reliance on such fascist-minded Koreans has more ominous possibilities, in view of the agreement made at Moscow for "the development of democratic self-government" in Korea under a joint Soviet-American trusteeship to last no longer than five years. And Gen. Hodge's reliance upon pro-Japanese Koreans jeopardizes the execution of the Moscow agreement. For the political clique used by General Hodge has no basis in popular support whatsoever outside Seoul, the Korean capital. It is composed of those who profited directly from the thirty-five-year Japanese rule of the peninsula, and could only maintain their wealth and their positions through its continuation or by inheriting its control. The clique includes the former Seoul consul for Japanese Manchuria; the "patent medicine king" of Korea, whose fortune was founded upon morphine; former Japanese police spies; businessmen whose "success" was dependent upon full collaboration with the Japanese against their own people, and a handful of big landlords. This junta calls itself the Korean Democratic Party.

It is buttressed by the Shanghai-Chungking emigre government, a group whose members had all been remote from Korean political life for thirty years when they were brought back to their homeland by the American military government. It had been freely predicted by Democratic Party spokesmen that the Chungking group alone would be permitted to return to southern Korea, although other exile governments of equal or higher standing were in existence elsewhere.

Furthermore, Democratic Party spokesmen said, the Chungking group would take over intact and without change the apparatus for administration and exploitation of Korea created by the Japanese. And finally, those political leaders who had gained their following by leading the long fight for Korean independence from within the country

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were to be barred from any participation in the government. As for ballot-box ratification of this program by the Korean people, that would come "later —maybe."

THESE predictions were uncannily accurate. Only a storm of protest prevented General Hodge from retaining the Japanese government staff intact. However, this protest forced only a slight change in his plans to use the governing apparatus created by the Japanese to dominate and loot Korea. The apparatus was maintained intact, the only change being the substitution of pro-Japanese personnel for the Japanese themselves.

Meanwhile the general, as predicted, consistently ignored those left-wing parties which represent the great majority of Koreans. Worse, when he did confer with the respected leader of the People's Party he greeted him with cynical insult, asking: "Well, how much did the Japanese pay you?" This opinion may have been formed in the company of those pro-Japanese upon whom the general relies, and whom he installed in nine of the eleven seats on the first "Korean Advisory Council." In Seoul these "Democrats" have been able to create an old-style Tammany machine, complete with graft, bribery and corruption, because they have been given control of all jobs open to Koreans. How complete is this control was shown by the demonstrations against the Moscow decisions which the Democratic Party was able to engineer in Seoul. Government offices were barren of employes, and the buildings themselves were used as distribution centers for placards, banners and flags denouncing the Moscow Agreement. Those gentlemen who serve as aides to General Hodge were reduced to firing the furnaces in his quarters in the palace of the former Japanese governor-general when the Democrats ordered his Korean servants out to demonstrate.

Selection of the men to serve as members of the new Representative Democratic Council is also in the hands of the Democratic-Chungking junta, which dominates it completely. For this reason, leaders of the left-wing parties, with one exception, have refused to serve upon the council. The present composition of the council, which repeats the advisory council farce, indicates that negotiations for political unification of Korea on a democratic basis will meet great obstacles. Indeed, that can be predicted from the statement by Dr. Syngman Rhee to newsmen in the presence of General Hodge, and apparently with his consent:

"No one in General Hodge's office or the military government is in favor of an allied trusteeship over this country."

This attempt to conceal opposition to creation of a democratic Korea under the guise of opposing trusteeship is typical of Dr. Rhee, who learned his politics during thirty years spent in Washington as American representative of the Chungking group. On first returning to Korea he made an even more revealing statement to newsmen when he called for immediate attack on the Soviet forces north of 38 degrees.

In making such wild statements with the approval of American military leaders who had him brought back to Korea, Dr. Rhee does not speak for the Korean people. Nor does any member of the Democratic-Chungking junta. Even with American military support the junta has been unable to recruit any following outside Seoul, where they control the jobs. Last week Dr. Rhee was granted "a temporary leave of absence" by the Representative Democratic Council because he was supposedly in poor health. That development is almost meaningless in view of the fact that Rhee will still continue his anti-Soviet propaganda as a "private citizen" and manipulate the council from behind the scenes.

DESPITE American repression and opposition, the parties of the left supporting the People's Republic, which was formed before the Americans arrived, continue to gain in popularity. Only the Democratic Party refused to participate in the congress which formed the republic, and even today in south Korea provisional governments installed by the People's Republic are in full control of local administration in a number of provinces.

Nevertheless, the military attempt to dupe the people of the United States as to the real political situation in southern Korea continues. During a recent State Department broadcast a returned military government official painted this picture of the Korean political scene:

". . . The smaller parties have merged into five main groups, the largest of which are the Democratic Party, which is supported by various classes, including businessmen, landowners and tenant farmers; the People's Republic, which advocates drastic economic reform and is supported, though not dominated, by the Communists, and the People's Party, which is also leftist in tendency."

Apparently the unnamed fifth group would be the Chungking emigres, who should be lumped with the Democratic Party. In all other respects the statement is a complete distortion. In the first place, the Democratic-Chungking junta is not a political party with national Korean standing; it is a machine operating only in Seoul, and even there it is able to maintain its dominance only with American military support.

In the second place it could not expect support "by various classes" because its leaders are known to the vast mass of the poverty-stricken Korean people as men who profited by the Japanese system of exploitation. General Hodge himself admitted the Democrats' "businessmen" were hated by the Korean people when he explained his intention to use them in these words:

"Korean businessmen must have ability; they made money even under the Japanese. They are hardheaded and realistic—but of course they are not liked by the Koreans."

It is even more preposterous to say that the handful of big landowners in the Democratic Party is "supported" politically by the tenant farmers. Fifty, sixty and even seventy percent of each crop raised by the tenant farmers was formerly claimed by these same landlords as their share; this was standard practice under the Japanese realty corporations which still hold "legal" title to eighty percent of the land.

Increasing agitation and pressure for reduction of these rates by the parties supporting the People's Republic forced the military government to limit the landlord's share to one-third. Further agrarian reform is feared by the landowners in the junta, since the program of the People's Republic also calls for grants of "land to the landless" through expropriation of the holdings of Japanese corporations and pro-Japanese Korean landlords.

EXPROPRIATION is also a nightmare to General Hodge's businessmen, who made vast profits during the war. And nationalization of the industrial properties that the Japanese built from the blood, sweat and tears of the Korean people, which is also part of the program of the People's Republic, will dispel forever the beautiful dream of old-style private ownership that General Hodge had first conjured up for them.

This program for agrarian and in-

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dustrial reform, which is the only logical solution for Korea's economic problems, has already been put into operation north of 38 degrees where the People's Republic is in complete control of internal Korean affairs. Consequently, political unification of the country and unhindered passage and communication between the two zones would immensely strengthen the parties supporting the People's Republic in the south.

General Hodge is fond of comparing his position in Korea to that of a man sitting on a powderkeg, but he himself has created the explosive situation by his opposition to all democratic elements in Korean life. Moreover, he himself has laid the fuse to the powderkeg through his reliance on those fascist-minded Koreans who would involve the United States in war with the Soviet Union in their own country, rather than allow democracy to prevail. Thus far neither the War nor State Departments have criticized Hodge and some observers are drawing the conclusion that what he is doing has official approval in Washington even if it means serious violation of the Moscow pact.

The danger in Korea is clear and immediate. It can be ended only if the Moscow Agreement is carried out to the letter, and in the spirit in which it was written, by those military men charged with its execution. Unless the agreement is carried through the danger of increasing strife on the continent of Asia, to which Korea holds a very important key, will be immensely sharpened.

Mr. Izard was a staff correspondent for "Yank" and has recently returned from Korea.

★ ★ ★

Dedication

I am that exile
from a future time,
from shores of freedom
I may never know
—Sol Funaroff.

For all who died too soon
For the early dead and the wasted young
For those who were taken at their noon:
Alexander Bergman betrayed by a festering lung,
Sol Funaroff executed by a poverty heart.
For Sam Jacobson, Ben Leider, Bernie Jacobs:
For all American airmen
For the Soviet pilots, the flyers of the RAF
and their final signatures of smoke and flame.

For the millions we can never name
For those lined up and shot in Paris, Warsaw, Odessa, Madrid
For the million and a half at Maidanek
For the five million Jews and their Pentateuch of pains
For those who were strangled with gas in their veins
For those who were cremated, torn by tanks,
left for display on a gibbet of shame.

For the frantic ranks
of refugees
For the children bewildered by their riddled parents and their hunger
For those who could resist no longer
and quietly put the bullet through the brain
For those who died
merely of starvation and disease:
for all of these.

For those whose heroism was repaid
in the counterfeit of neutrality, the bankruptcy of abandonment
For those who are buried at Guadalajara
For those who survived to see the dead betrayed
and refused to betray themselves and went on fighting,
died in the windy Kasserine pass,
the hot Sicilian hills, the winey Normandy grass,
found their graves in the green inferno of Guadalcanal,
became familiar with the maggots of Morotai.
For those who never got to the beaches, killed in the Kwajalein lagoon:
for each of them, for all.

For all who died too soon
For those who died without knowing why,
harried by blizzard and fog and the endless rains,
cursing the mud, the lost years, the interminable campaigns
northwest of New Guinea, northeast of Rome.
For the unwary, hit by the sniper at Samar,
the youngsters grenaded in foxholes while they dreamed of home.

For the forgotten, the anonymous
For the thousands at Babi Yar
For the child who cried
mother why are they throwing dirt on us
For the Filipino and the American
and that bloody Easter morning on Bataan:
for all who died
in the harshest bitterest time:

We cannot honor you with plaques
We cannot build you monuments enough
We cannot write on the accusing scroll
more than a merest fraction of the toll.
Our tributes are continuous attacks
on the bristling beach, the contested bluff;
in peace, on the persistent enemy:
the final fortresses of prejudice,
the pillboxes of poverty.
We pledge no armistice
till out of all the horror we have hewn
the future for which you fell;
till we can point to our lives and say:
this joy is not for us alone
but for all who died too soon.

EPHIM G. FOGEL.

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FOUR BROTHERS AND YOU

By HOWARD FAST

On the fifth of February, in 1946, four brothers met together for the first time in more than two years. One was a soldier, one a sailor, one a veteran, and the fourth a civilian. Meeting again, after all that long time, they were drawn together by those strange and wonderful bonds that unite brothers. If you have a brother, you will know what those bonds are, and you will know what the feeling between brothers is; you will also know, better than I could say it, what words were exchanged between these brothers.

These brothers, whose name was Ferguson, who were Negroes, boarded a bus at Hempstead, Long Island, to go to their home at Roosevelt. At Freeport, they left the bus and went into a lunchroom, where they asked for coffee. The man behind the counter refused to serve them, and when they insisted, he ordered them out of the lunchroom. Angry, but not disorderly—not by any stretch of the imagination disorderly—they left the lunchroom and walked over to the colored section of Freeport. They had a drink or two there, and they talked about the bitter pleasures of a land that considered them good enough to serve in war but not good enough to enter a public restaurant.

Then they went back to catch the bus home. They were almost at the terminal when they were stopped by a policeman, Joseph Romeika by name. Romeika made an insulting remark, and Charles, the veteran who had reenlisted and now wore his country's uniform, lost his temper and answered back.

It might be asked at this point—and rightfully enough—why the policeman stopped them at all, but the naivete betrayed by such a question might lead to further inquiry: why did the policeman follow this by kicking Charles in the groin, another brother in the thigh, and then pulling his gun and lining all four of them up against the wall?

The Ferguson brothers knew about guns: remember that three of them had been in a war; and they put their hands up and did as the policeman ordered them to do. And then, after swearing at them, insulting them, the policeman killed two of them and wounded a third—the policeman was a crack shot, but even if he wasn't it would not have been difficult to shoot to death two men standing a yard away with hands raised.

And then the wheels of *justice* began to turn. The two dead Negroes were left lying there; the wounded brother and the unwounded brother were dragged off to jail. The wounded boy, with a bullet hole in his shoulder, was given the expert medical attention of a scrap of adhesive tape over each hole. The unwounded boy was sentenced to one hundred days in jail by the local judge, who warned him about the company he kept. And the policeman was exonerated by the grand jury.

And we, you and I and every other good, decent citizen of this great and powerful democracy of ours are left with such unspeakable shame as we have not known in a long, long time. This did not happen in the deep South; there were no mysterious elements involved; no flags with the crooked cross flew over Freeport: it was in our own back yard that this rotten thing happened, in a suburb of our queen of cities, where, as they say, tolerance and culture have been raised to a level beyond all the rest of the land.

You would think, would you not, that following hard upon this shameful affair there would be such an outcry as all men would hear, a voice of anger to reach into the remotest corner of the nation, a wave of protest, a storm of indignation?

But that was not the case.

You would think, would you not, that in the Congress of this republic and in the legislature of this proud and sovereign state, many, many voices would call for a different kind of justice?

But those voices were not raised.

"How do you think we'll look on the back of a half-dollar?"

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You would think, would you not, that the much-hailed free press of this free city would carry news stories and editorials which blazed with anger—which indicted a system which permitted such things to happen?

But that, too, was not the case.

Yet you would think, at least, would you not, that in our pulpits, which are set up under those lofty ceilings, under the domed roofs, to preach the brotherhood of man—there, at least, you would think a note of protest, of shame, of sorrow, would sound?

The men in the pulpits were engaged in other matters.

The silence was deep and profound. True, here and there voices were raised—but not in the high places, not in the streamlined periodicals, not in the halls of justice, not in the houses of God. In those places, the silence was deep and profound.

So, LEFT as we are, in our complete and unspeakable shame, we have good reason for reflection. It is not enough to hate Jim Crow; it is not enough to hate anti-Semitism; it is not enough to hate a fixed and a perjured justice, such as operated in the framework of this infamous case. Those are not enough. There must be protests, mass meetings and more mass meetings, and still it is not enough; our voices must boil up like a cauldron of hot anger—but even that will not be enough.

It will only be enough when we learn the nature of the gun. Consider the gun; consider it muzzle on, as it looked to those four brothers, as they stood with their backs to the wall.

It has a familiar tilt, hasn't it? It is recognizable, isn't it—as recognizable as if it were giving tongue from the black hole of its muzzle? Different, somehow, from other guns? And now, as you search back in your memory, it comes clearer.

The same gun that stalked through Berlin in a brown uniform, then in a black one; the gun that punched holes in the heads of anti-fascists who lay in the concentration camps, too weak to rise; the gun that slashed the faces of Russian and Polish and French children and battered in their skulls; the gun that murdered and killed until the whole world was a slaughterhouse.

And today, the gun is in your own back yard. What are you going to do about it? Have we learned nothing? Is any crime greater than silence or indifference?

A CONFERENCE CALL FOR THE "NEW AND IMPROVED" NEW MASSES AS A CRUSADING CULTURAL POLITICAL MAGAZINE

Dear Friend:

This is a cordial invitation for representatives of your organization to meet with us and discuss how a "new and improved" NEW MASSES can best serve your cultural and educational needs.

We are glad to announce such important improvements will be made in our magazine, beginning with the Special Win-the-Peace Issue. We need your full help and participation to make the new magazine do the best job for your organization. We want NEW MASSES to become known as *the* crusading cultural political magazine—meaning culture in the broad sense of the life of the people.

Fiction and philosophy, poetry and politics, criticism and cartoons, education and exposes, science and psychiatry—all are to be linked up with the life of the American people.

No mere reflection of headlines, our articles will dig deeply into the major issues of our time. Needless to say, NEW MASSES will keep its crusading leadership in the fight against reaction and bigotry. As a Marxist publication, it will seek to convince Americans that socialism is the way to win a happy, prosperous, peaceful world.

We want every issue to be invaluable to the entire progressive and labor movement.

So we call this conference to get your advice and help in working out details for bringing this new magazine into being.

And we hope your representatives will also stay for the dinner where we will welcome new working members of the editorial board—Richard O. Boyer, Howard Fast, Herbert Aptheker, Lloyd Brown, Albert E. Kahn and James S. Allen—in a distinguished program.

Sincerely,
JOSEPH NORTH, *Editor.*

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DINNER—6:30 PM
SATURDAY, APRIL 13TH, 1946
PARAMOUNT RESTAURANT
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TYPEWRITER TERMITES

By JOHN STUART

In the most insidious way the American mind is being drenched with poison to prepare it for imperialist war. The newspapers are pouring out their inky toxins by the bucketsful. The radio trust is letting loose all its high-priced war voices. Book publishers are beginning to rush to the market-place with anti-Communist and anti-Soviet "exposes." The whole arsenal of imperialist war madness is being refurnished, restocked and reprocessed with all that the Hitlerites have contributed to it plus the special brands of monopoly propaganda developed in the United States.

Thus the iron curtain is being pulled over every unwary head.

American fascism is readying to strike its first concerted blows. In my opinion the time is short, very short. Our gilded rulers are now in a race for the unsuspecting American mind before they race out over the earth, plundering and murdering with their atomic bombs. The time is short because the time for them is short. They know the crisis in which international capitalism is steeped. The poultices applied to the ulcerated body of capitalism have only brought more ulcers. One recourse, then, for the robber barons is their stockpile of atomic bombs—to use the bombs before others can make them and thereby equalize the armaments superiority which the American imperialists now have.

I say this because it is my feeling that the storm signals need to be raised even higher for more to see and to ponder. I say this too because a titanic job faces all democrats. They must organize, and with the greatest speed, in the broadest and most unshakable of fronts to stop the catastrophe. That is the immediate task all of us face. If our writers, our journalists, our artists—and I am thinking primarily of them at the moment because they will man the communications system of the democratic anti-war front—do not respond with greater rapidity, do not shake themselves into action, along with an aroused labor movement, then the race against their enemies will be harder to win.

It is the subtle, the intangible propaganda that we must especially worry about. If all the warmongers stated their case baldly, in full battle array, the task of reply and exposure would be easier. The strongest instincts of man would compel him to fight it. But the "genteel" warmongers, the shrewder ones, creep up on unwary Americans with cat's feet. They allow the lunatic fringe to do the shouting and the yammering while they concentrate their energies on selling poison without the skull and bones. Instead they package the poison in colorful paper and bind it with neat ribbons. When Vandenberg rises in the Senate to speak he speaks in the name of "democracy," of "allied unity." He even offers the USSR a treaty of non-aggression. Yet behind this screen of "altruism," which unfortunately not enough Americans have pierced, are the most bloodcurdling of conspiracies.

And what can be more subtle than the President of the United States appointing Herbert Hoover to the chairmanship of the Famine Emergency Committee? It lifts to a level of dignity and importance a man who said he would choose fascism if he had to choose between it and communism. It honors a man whom President Roosevelt would not allow into the White House during his administration. And perhaps through that act of Truman some Americans will be made to think that Hoover has changed—changed enough so that Truman can reward him with the job of feeding Europe. Contemptible Herbie will in time be transformed into "good old Herbie." This is the poison to guard against—the seemingly insignificant act.

An equally subtle form of war propaganda is the kind generated by the Social Democrats in their paper the *New Leader*. Within the ranks of the Social Democrats hides the Trotzkyite, James T. Farrell. They provide space for such war-mad anti-Sovieteers as William Henry Chamberlin, David Dallin, Eugene Lyons, Max Eastman, Louis Fischer. All of them are now blasting those few publications which, for whatever reason, occasionally publish a truthful article about the USSR or refuse to publish wholly untruthful reports about world affairs.

Their subtlety consists of using anti-imperialist phrases to obscure their imperialist intent. They are masters of "stop thief" semantics. They have enough knowledge of the labor movement and the Soviet Union to provide the money giants with intellectual weapons. In the United States they form the leading intellectual echelons directed against Europe's new democracies. In rarefied liberal circles their prestige is such that even otherwise perceptive people will excuse their political foibles on the ground that they are "good writers." Let it be said at once that the committees an artist joins or the causes he espouses are a continuation of his art by other means. If one wants to see how that process operates let him glance at the work of Arthur Koestler, who can portray his fictional anti-Sovieteers with considerable deftness only because he himself has become deft in its practice.

Or take James T. Farrell himself. In the *New Leader* the other day Farrell castigated the editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* for publishing articles by Anna Louise Strong on Poland. He takes the editor, Edward Weeks, to task for a lack of "disinterestedness." In the name of a free press Farrell vilifies him for publishing a few articles about the USSR with some sense and some truth. Farrell writes that all publications are being closed to anyone who disagrees with Soviet politics. "Again and again," he says, "those who seek to present a critical view of any phase of Stalinism or of Stalinist policies are repressed, misrepresented, censored and their manuscripts are rejected."

For rational minds the enormity of this falsehood is self-evident. With the exceptions that can be listed on the back of a three-cent stamp, the overwhelming majority of American periodicals and newspapers — commanding the largest numbers of readers—rarely, if ever, publish an objective piece on the Soviet Union. Millions are spent by *Reader's Digest*, *Life*, *Time*, *Fortune*, the *Saturday Evening Post*, the Hearst, McCormick-Patterson and Scripps-Howard chains for no other purpose than to poison the American mind with just the kind of articles Farrell claims are suppressed. Forests of newsprint and oceans of ink bespatter and besmirch the USSR day in and day out. There is absolute freedom for the Typhoid Marys of anti-Soviet journalism. And even in those channels of communication where occasional pieces friendly to the Soviet Union appear they are

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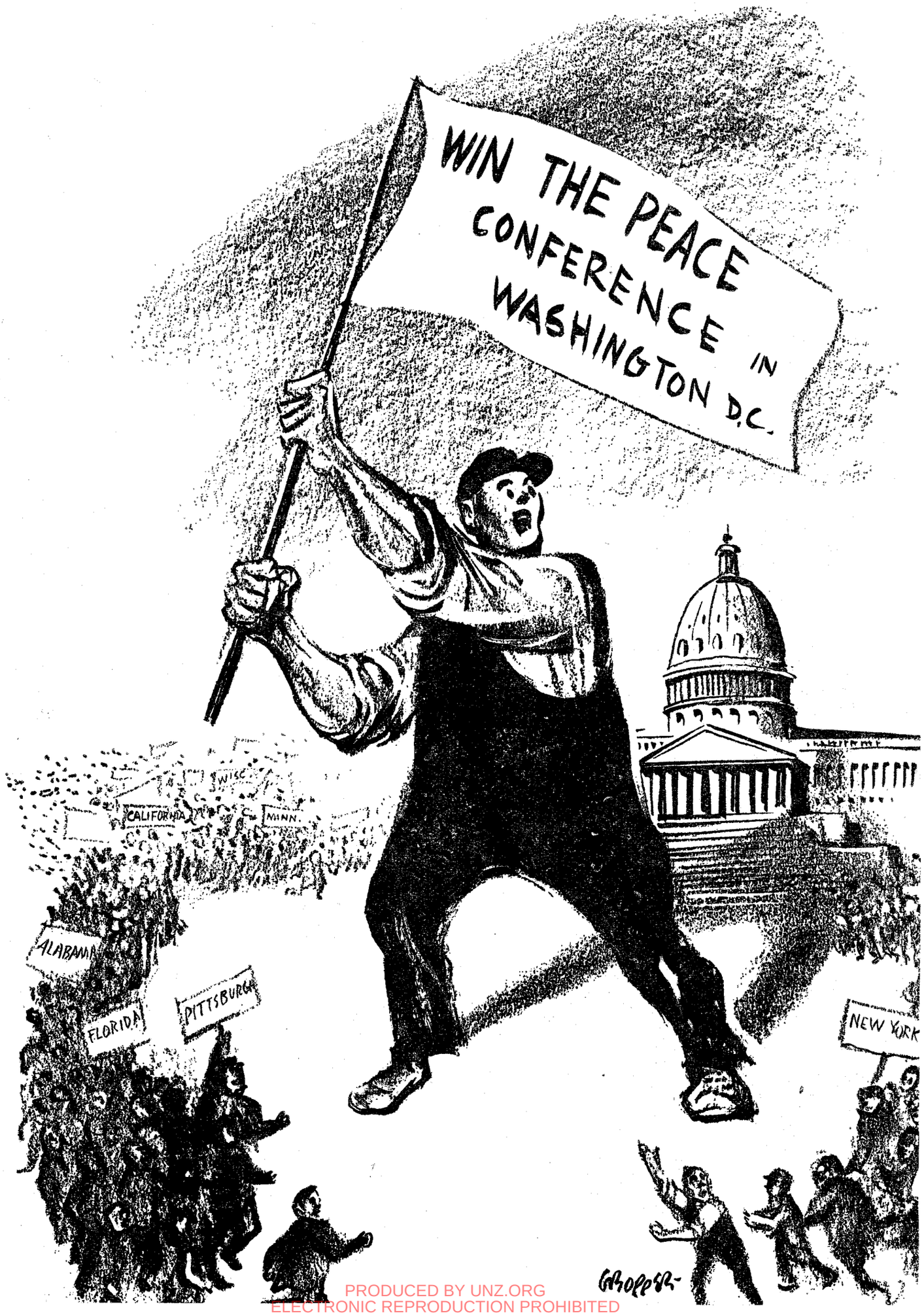

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overshadowed, surrounded and engulfed by hostile stories.

The *Atlantic Monthly*, perhaps obeying simple impulses of decency, has from time to time published good articles on the USSR. Yet for fourteen years the *Atlantic* had on its editorial staff William Henry Chamberlin, a leading anti-Soviet incendiary. Chamberlin in February resigned from the *Atlantic*, along with the late Raymond Leslie Buell, because editor Weeks apparently refused to publish articles by Freda Utley and Louis Fischer and failed, as Chamberlin puts it, to give a hearing "to men of long experience and knowledge of Russian affairs like Max Eastman, Eugene Lyons and David Dallin."

It is Chamberlin whom Farrell defends in his letter to the *Atlantic's* editor. And if you would know something of Farrell you can easily judge him by knowing something of the man in whose behalf he speaks. Chamberlin, in addition to writing a regular column for the *New Leader*, also writes for the *Wall Street Journal* without a qualm of conscience. Nor should that surprise anyone, because politically the difference between the Social Democratic *New Leader* and the *Wall Street Journal* is simply one of mastheads. In the same issue of the *New Leader* in which Farrell's open letter to the *Atlantic* appears there is, for example, an article titled "Against Indonesian Independence."

Chamberlin has also shown strong anti-Semitic feelings. (For a revealing dossier on the man and his work see Sender Garlin's excellent pamphlet, *Enemies of the Peace.*) In his book, *Confessions of an Individualist*, Chamberlin wrote of his Soviet "experience" as follows: "Considerable numbers of Jews have made careers in Soviet bureaucracy. Of perhaps a dozen officials whom I knew in the Press Department of the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, I recall only one who was not a Jew. Indeed the predominance of Jews in this Commissariat at the time of my stay in Russia was almost ludicrous." Elsewhere in the same book Chamberlin wrote that "the Soviet Union is the only country where I have had to struggle against an occasional anti-Semitic impulse. Sonya [his wife] and I sometimes privately referred to the Jews as 'the dominant race,' and many of the Jewish Soviet officials were decidedly unprepossessing types, bumptious, arrogant, shifty, suspicious, and rather obsessed with a well-founded inferiority complex."

Winds from Fulton, Missouri.

This is Chamberlin—the unexcelled anti-Semitic expert on the Soviet Union, columnist for the *New Leader*, columnist for the *Wall Street Journal* and the man whom that "good writer" James T. Farrell defends.

Their onslaught on the few publications that print honest material on Russia is part and parcel of the campaign to gag these publications. Last year Louis Fischer resigned from *The Nation* because it refused to follow his policies. He even lacked the guts to say explicitly that the reason for his resignation was his inability to persuade *The Nation's* editors to write in a Hearstian manner about the USSR.

We can expect more of this literary terror from these "good writers" who join the wrong committees. We can expect also in the days ahead that liberal writers will be shaken to the roots by imperialism's war of nerves. Everything will be hurled against them just as everything is being hurled now against the atomic scientists. Imperialism is without sensibilities, yet it is clever and shrewd and what it cannot bend with money it will bend with terror—first the dry terror and then the bloody. The Trotskyites and the unreconstructed Social Democrats will continue serving the imperialist cause in their traditional role. It is they who will master-mind the ideological struggle within the labor movement, spreading subtle poison among the unwary. It is against them that progressive intellectuals will have to direct heavy fire as part of organizing an anti-war front.

In this struggle the greatest alertness is imperative. It is an alertness that must show itself in relentless battle against imperialism. Every writer, every artist with a sense of the issues must, therefore, see himself in the center of a critical emergency. Every hour, every day counts. If the minutes tick away empty and unfulfilled there will be others to take advantage of them. The enemy does not sit on his hands. To join in the struggle against imperialist war, for a resumption of real cooperation among the Big Three, for an abundant democracy at home—all this is to meet the highest and most compelling responsibilities of the artist-citizen. He has many allies and will have even more as he uses his talents in rousing the country to the grave danger. Culture will wither and die and America will become a vast prison-land if we delay or continue to be bewitched by the illusion that having won the war against Hitler we have won the war against fascism.

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A DAY AT THE SHOP

By CHARLES HUMBOLDT

THE boss. Clearly a wack of the first water. All day long, every time he looked at us, his ulcers backfired on him. He hated us, the machines, the elevator man, lunch time and six o'clock. On Saturday afternoons he must have taken his kids to the slaughterhouse so they would know their Sunday dinner didn't come out of thin air.

He owned two linotypes, a partner, George, me, and Herbie who came in after school and worked until he dropped dead. The next afternoon they sent a new Herbie around.

A palace all right. The machines were held together with paper clips; the partner, Wilgus, was pale as farina and stuffed his left nostril with cotton; George, the flounder, the third boss, gave me the wrong names, the wrong addresses and the wrong copy, and when I answered the telephone he yelled, "Answer the telephone." When I came in and shut the door he yelled, "Shut the door." Herbie was sore because the boss wouldn't give him a towel and soap. So he used the boss' towel behind the clothes rack and when Weiss, pardon me, Mr. Weiss, sent him for water he spit in the glass. Only Old Faithful, the clock, was Weiss' friend. It was ten minutes fast in the morning. It hid behind some trash at one o'clock, staggered through the afternoon, and fell a quarter of an hour behind time at night.

The day I was hired and the day I was fired were not far apart. In fact it's hardly a story. When you go for a job you don't look the place in the mouth. But you can't help noticing a thing or two. The building. On the outside, a Greek temple lifted its dirty head from the eighth to the twelfth floor. Below that it was just plain filth, also antique. Eight-thirty in the morning the lobby was full of coughing clients waiting for the elevator. "What's the matter there's no heat today," said the fur workers, "the first time in ten years?" The elevator was like a bird cage, only instead of bird drip the floor was covered with butts, matches, mud, gum and tootsie rolls. Charlie, the elevator man, had the flu. He would put his head on the bars and sleep between stops. He could do it because the lift ran a minute a floor. Sometimes it stopped between the third and the fourth and the girls would begin to squeak, but not hard. They were used to it. Then Charlie opened the door and we jumped down and climbed the rest of the way. Charlie slept for a while and then eased the elevator down to the bottom.

"Here you are," Weiss called, without looking up from his machine on which the paper clips shivered every time he sent through a line. "Put metal in the pot, run to Ready, Reliable, Prompt, Mercury and Efficient for copy, throw the garbage out of the window and stop dreaming for Chrissake." His partner, Wilgus, said "Son, get metal from everybody and tell them your boss will fire you if they don't give you any." Wilgus always had a laugh for you, like a dagger in the ribs. His technique was to stab you and then smile in your face to leave you with a good impression. George yelled, "Shut the door," and the day was on.

I noticed the boss was wearing my apron, and the yellow pencils I brought in yesterday for the galleys were sticking behind his ears. I figured I'd get them when I came back and ran off to the printer's.

AT THE printer they either pretend not to know what you came for or that you're two days late. Metal is unheard of. They can't break up the forms because in three years somebody might want to reprint an ad and they'll save twenty cents. Without exception they respected Mr. Weiss. At Ready his name was Pyoik, at Reliable it was Bagelbrain, at Mercury they called him Picklepuss. All morning I ran from one place to another, delivering, collecting, explaining, apologizing, a regular ambassador for the House of Weiss, expense account zero with a gentleman's agreement on overtime—to ignore it. An attache with a collapsible feed bag for carrying state secrets, slipping in and out of doors and traffic like Sidney Franklin, the Brooklyn bullfighter, in two hours I hardly knew who I was anymore.

I finally got back to the shop.

"Where's the couch?" Weiss asked. He was setting "The Lord Is My Shepherd" for the church on 27th Street.

"What couch?"

"The couch you been sleeping on since you left here."

"Look, Mr. Weiss—" I said.

"A fine speech!" he howled, springing up like a tiger. "Crapping around all morning and now a manifesto. That's the A Number One method for getting fired."

I forgot about home for a minute and began to feel fine. "Swell," I said. "Take off my apron and hand over the yellow pencils on your ears."

"What! Who's boss here? You or me? Not until I say you're fired are you fired. George, give him something to do. He's tearing the hair right off my head."

"Yes sir," George said.

My heart sank. After all, you can't tell the folks you didn't like the boss. I went over to George.

George couldn't talk straight at you. He had to be doing something at the same time. He must have felt guilty about being insignificant. He was working at the saw.

"Listen," he said, "I told you to shut the door. Bring this package to Strauss." He stopped the saw and started picking butts off the floor. "By the way, about getting fired. Don't worry. Wait until tonight. Mr. Weiss couldn't give up the apron and the pencils until then."

George had a way of giving you a name like Strauss and when you asked which Strauss he said, "Don't you know anything? Look it up in the telephone book," and then you had to ask him what initial, which made him sore and then he gave you the wrong initial, say H instead of N. So in fifteen minutes I was calling him from a booth because H. Strauss had never heard of our concern.

"I don't know what you're talking about and you don't know what you're talking about," George said.

"What I know I'm too polite to tell you. I'm at the wrong Strauss," I said.

"Who told you to go to the wrong Strauss, you dummy?"

"Who gave me the address, Socrates?"

"All right, all right," George said, "here's the right address, and don't make another mistake."

By that time it was long after lunch. When I asked Wilgus the first day how long I had for lunch, he said, "Why don't you eat up here? Get acquainted. We don't think about time." But as he had on his stiletto smile I figured if he

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got through a sandwich in ten minutes I'd also be through getting acquainted. After one or two cheesecake jokes what can you do but go back to work? Where the boss is a boss take it for granted, you're a slave; but where the boss is a slave, God help you, you're a mule and all you can do is kick yourself. Wilgus wouldn't take a minute off to visit the can even if his teeth felt like harpstrings. So I told him I liked fresh air.

"Fresh air!" he said, pushing the cotton up his left nostril, "do *I* need fresh air?"

"How much time have I got?" I said, dropping diplomacy down the bowl.

"Ask Mr. Weiss when he comes in," he said in a huff.

When I asked Weiss he sighed, "Lunch?" in such a funny voice I thought he was trying to hypnotize me, but seeing I still wanted to eat he fell back, looked sharp at me as if he was measuring me for a suit of clothes, and said, "Forty to thirty minutes."

So now when I went to eat I could hear Weiss thinking to himself, what does a louse like me do with the difference between the time I have a sandwich, danish and coffee and a whole half hour? Who am I to read a paper, look at the tomatoes from the offices and smoke sitting down? Who am I to do what the boss would do if he wasn't a heel? That was the trouble. He knew he was a heel and he couldn't forget it or forgive you for knowing it. Because he couldn't hide his character. What boss can, anyway?

Well, when I was through I went to the Ludlow shop where I was supposed to pick up some ad heads. Just as I got there the phone rang. The turnip at the desk put me on. Weiss.

"Hello? You talking? Nothing, nothing. I thought you'd forget to go there."

"So you called up to remind me?"

I knew he was sore because he spent a nickel for the pleasure of bawling me out later and now it was wasted. I was on time.

"Excuse me for being fresh," I said, "but you're keeping me from my work."

"Excuse me, but you're fired," he yelled for effect.

"I'll be right over for my apron and pencils."

"Bring back the heads.".

"Who, me? Send over the new boy you got when you fired me."

He hissed and hung up.

I was talking big, but right then I knew that he'd find an excuse to get rid of me that night, like George said. If I chiseled a minute here and there that showed respect, but when I answered back on time he knew I had a system in which he didn't rate as the sun. They don't mind if you hate them, but you're not supposed to act like a human being, because then they would have to be human and where would the business be? I was learning, but not quickly enough.

So the rest of the afternoon I ran around, cut slugs, fed the pot, cleared the roof, pulled proofs, answered the telephone and brought home metal without a word from anybody. George wouldn't speak to me and Herbie was tipped off I was in the doghouse. Only if we passed in the hall outside he'd say as he went by, "The pyoik," or "Why don't you spit in his eye?" to let me know where he stood. In a union Herbie would be a good kid, but here he'd dry up to a lot of words and get like George.

It finally got around to six o'clock. This was the time for Weiss to find all of a sudden a dozen things for me to do so that I'd be able to show my interest in the business for another hour. Tonight was no exception. He wanted me to wait around for him to set twenty lines and leave them somewhere on my way home.

"Home is in the other direction," I told him.

"The Firebug," pen and ink sketch by Burliuk.

"Home is where the boss wants it to be, south tonight, north tomorrow." King Kong, right or wrong, but always King Kong. So I thought maybe I'd hold the job if I kept my trap shut. But it was not to be.

WHILE I was waiting for Weiss to finish setting the copy, I picked up the paper and started to read. There was a very interesting article by an American correspondent in Greece. Very poetic too, if you know what I mean. The full moon was spraying the shore with light and falling through the olive groves of Africa and the slim shapes of warships stood out against the snowy beach. I almost got a crush on a destroyer the way he described it. Your correspondent had a very fine dinner, pig from teeth to tail, turkey and chicken and gallons of wine. Some landowner was giving this party and there was a perfectly ravishing guest there called Falstaff who was a monk for two years before he joined the Black and Tans in Ireland. Then he became a Knight of Malta and a Papal Count. He weighed more than three hundred pounds and couldn't wear a collar because his neck was too fat. This Scotchman earned his living in damn screwy ways. Once he assisted an Arab sheik who was also a surgeon in cutting off people's right arms for stealing. He and the sheik did this with anaesthetics and a scalpel, the article said, "thus combining the advantages of modern science with the usages of tribal custom." Now he was a hero of the Greek Royalists, formerly of Cairo. There was also a priest with his hair done up in a bun. He had deep eyes and a biblical mien, just like all priests in the newspapers. There was a chorus of officers.

After dinner the priest's daughter, who had an hour-glass figure inherited from the days of Minos, sang, "Matia, matia, matia, mou," which in plain English means love now for ye may no longer be able to love tomorrow.

The Scotchman sang a cheesecake

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song which nobody understood but everybody liked instinctively as ladies and gentlemen and one of the officers walked around on his hands. Then the landowner said, "God aid our democratic Greece," and everybody winked.

Right there I started dreaming I was a correspondent. Some life. A right arm for breakfast; for lunch, a hashed native; high tea with monocles at five; and the priest's daughter with a Scotch and soda for supper. Three months of haw haw and rawther. In a year I have my picture in the *Times* Sunday section with a caption, "Colonel Sulz-Lowndes, Stalin's Severest Critic." It's a full-face photo and I am wearing my steel-grey eyes for the occasion. Any dopey materialist would know that here is a man whose mind has risen above matter and who has soared like an eagle beyond the Bronx and Brooklyn. I am quoted saying, "Our marines are defending the democracy of the intellect in China," and "Politics is a spiritual exercise. That is where the Russians fail us." In one year count me a flop if my own mother knows me. I have, of course, cut off all family ties. No sacrifice is too great for my cause. Because the family must be preserved by stern, lonely men who can deprive themselves of their relatives if necessary.

I was about to develop these thoughts further along the same lines when Weiss grabbed the paper. Well, here it was, the finis. With some hair around his neck he would have outglared the Metro-Goldwyn lion.

"A lounge lizard I got in my shop. The New York *Times* no less! I should pay for your education." And he threw the sheets around the shop.

"On my wages," I said, "I'll send myself through kindergarten. Why don't you get an orphan to work for you?"

"A fine speech," he said. "You, I suppose, are J. P. Morgan's nephew in disguise."

"Sure, I'll make you an offer. With the paper clips and the good will you built up I'll have a fine bankruptcy."

"A brilliant remark," he screamed. "Another crack like that, my fine feathered friend, and you'll be carrying your brains in a truss."

"Mr. Weiss, the sensitive idealist," I said. "He dreams that his thirty machines work twenty-four hours a day without a squirt, not a single mat ever gets lost or stuck in the magazines, he never has to buy metal because the printers give him back overweight, the boys come at 6 AM and leave at 9 PM, there is no wage-hour law, and anyway when Mr. Weiss asks the operators if they want to get paid for overtime, they politely say, 'Don't mention it.'

"Mr. Weiss also owns the cafeteria in the building. Here no dishes are ever broken, the checks are all punched up to a dollar, the leftovers go into the chocolate ice cream, the customers use sugar sparingly, and if anybody tries to get away with the silverware, no dice. A special acid on the spoons eats through the pockets. Kling-a-ling, they drop on the floor right by the cash register. When the union organizer comes around, the girls scream, 'Mr. Weiss, here's the troublemaker, throw him out!' "

But all the time I was thinking, from the heights to the depths in twenty seconds, from royalty to relief; and besides, where was all the dignity I was storing up in my imagination? Did I have to answer him? Would Eugene Sulz-Lowndes, even that pot, have answered him? What was I, anyway, a lord or a louse?

Weiss kept opening and closing his fist like fish gills. He looked as if he was having an inspiration. Wilgus ran over with a fountain pen. He looked scared. The cotton was hanging out of his nostril. "All right, Sam, count ten, give him his check and let him go. You didn't hear nothing. Do you want him to have a fit, you dope?" he said to me. George and Herbie were over in the corner pretending they were running off proofs. They kept pushing the roller forwards and backwards.

All of a sudden I felt sick and tired of the whole thing. Weiss and his droopy shop and those fancy pants in Greece. Every day he killed himself making a living and every night they celebrated their love of liberty by swallowing a box car of capons and whiskey. While they watched the moon, we watched the clock; the priest's daughter crooned as we yelled at each other. For all his shouting he would never move to West End Avenue and for all my wisecracks I was no foreign correspondent. But I wasn't a louse either.

So I took the check and the apron and pencils and said goodby to Weiss. Now that I wasn't working for him he looked more human. I suppose I looked more human to him too. But I had other things to worry about. To look for another job. Also, I was trying to figure out something—how I got to connect Weiss and me with that bunch in Greece. That Falstaff with his knife sitting on top of the world. The world of a million shops and Weisses and Herbies working and eating their hearts out to live like human beings.

The Bullring Of Badajoz

Slowly did the sand cool and the
Sun sank low behind the stones
Of the bullring. Shattered bones

And the echo of the dying
Spilled along the wooden tiers.
Crippled days and rotting years

Since the coming of the age
Of the beast, the flaming decade
Of the monster, since the naked

Bull broke loose. The fools applauded
The new role he had assumed.
Patent-leather blackguards, plumed

With the arrogance of cowards,
Royalists, indebted slavers,
Black-frocked cheats and pimping saviors,

Licensed, practiced, well-paid cutthroats
Herded prisoners and bleeding
Half-dead soldiers, mothers, feeding

Babies, into the arena.
Packed the gaping round with men,
Bolted, braced the gates. And then

Raked the corral with machineguns.
And the sky broke and the full
Sun revealed the rampant bull.

* * *

Putrid days and gutted years
That we waited! But the time, the
Time has come. Watch the grimy,

Obscene, maddened animal!
From its horns, gored, hangs the torn
Flesh of the republic, born and

Massacred in birth. The tailhair,
Pitted with excretion, sweat,
Stands erect. The short and fat

Legs are trembling, stinking urine
Running freely. Yellow spittle
Flecks the throat. The stupid little

Eyes are bloodshot. Fear and hatred
Break its knees. A black and shameless
Beast, it lumbers, raging, nameless,

Toward the quick and blessed blade.
Quickly let the sand cool and the
Stones shall bury it forever.

RUDY BASS.

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PAY ENVELOPES AND PRICES

By THOMAS GANNON

PRESIDENT TRUMAN described his recent executive order on wages and prices as a bulge rather than a breakthrough in the price line. It is a bulge which is showing considerable capacity for expansion. Despite Economic Stabilization Administrator Chester Bowles' assurances before the House Banking and Currency Committee that the new wage-price policy "will have little or no effect on apparel prices," the Office of Price Administration has authorized increases in cotton textile prices up to fifteen percent, with "much" of the increase slated to be passed on to consumers when they buy men's and boys' shirts, shorts and pajamas, women's and girls' dresses, and work clothing.

A couple of days later the OPA authorized price increases on new cars at both the manufacturing and retailing levels to the Chrysler, Ford and Hudson companies—a boost which will undoubtedly be given to all the others in the industry. Even before the new wage-price policy was announced, OPA had granted some 5,000 price increases since V-J Day. Under the Truman order this process is being accelerated of picking consumers' pockets to swell corporation profits that are already enormous by any standards.

The President's wage-price policy represents a surrender to the reactionary head of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion, John W. Snyder, the dedicated servant of big business who, despite rumors to the contrary, remains in essential control of administration economic policy. The order is a trap for labor for two reasons:

1. It not only encourages but will energetically promote the use of wage increases as an instrument for puncturing price ceilings even in situations where employers would otherwise not dream of it.

2. The order is so rigged that a War Stabilization Board in which labor participates, "approves" of wage increases that are used as a basis for raising prices. Labor thus becomes a partner in promoting inflation.

The trap which has been set for labor is a menacing one. Unless labor becomes more actively aware of the role in which it has been cast by the Administration there is a very real danger that the wage increases that have been won will be utilized to force price increases. Labor will be used to pull the employers' chestnuts out of the fire. And something new has been added to make the dangers in the present situation even graver. The AFL and John L. Lewis have openly vowed to destroy the price control program in the name of "free enterprise." They have become auxiliaries to the campaign against price control being waged by the National Association of Manufacturers.

The CIO on the other hand, promptly recognized that the new wage-price policy is a disastrous one for labor and the people. In a letter sent to Chester Bowles on February 25, Philip Murray stated: "It would be severely injurious to the common welfare if, after the principles governing wage settlements had been established, their application were deferred for an indefinite period of time or if they were applied in such a way as to deprive the workers who struggled to achieve those settlements of the full fruits of them."

Here is what the new wage-price policy does:

If an employer fails to obtain approval by a tripartite Wage Stabilization Board of a wage increase which he can count as part of his costs in seeking price "relief," he waives his right indefinitely to use the

New Masses' Inquiring Artist asks: What do you think about OPA?

"Are you a Communist?"

"Too much control and not enough price."

"I'd have to ask my maid."

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wage increase for price "relief" purposes. By holding this club over the employer a mighty pressure is created not to grant wage increases without seeking higher prices. Why should an employer find out through experience whether he can increase wages and still make what he considers satisfactory profits if an error in judgment will mean a permanent waiver of a claim to price "relief"? Naturally all employers will flock to government agencies for price increases immediately.

This new order is a retreat from the order it supplants, which was issued on August 18, 1945. Under the old order an employer could put into effect a wage increase without applying for price "relief" and if at any time within six months he thought that the increase required it, he could then apply for price "relief." We are told week after week in the *Saturday Evening Post* that the justification for the huge profits of American corporations is their willingness to take risks, that profits are the reward for risks. But John Snyder, who wrote the main portions of the order, does not believe that American corporations ought to take risks on their prices even for six months.

THE rest of the order elaborates in other ways the false theory that wage increases have an inflationary effect on prices. Last October President Truman said in a speech that unprecedented wartime profits of American business meant that management could afford wage increases and that the loss in take-home pay could be cushioned without a break in the price line. This assertion has now been dumped overboard.

The entire order is based on the theory that wage increases cannot be absorbed without price boosts. The order sets forth certain groups of wage increases which are called "approvable." These "approvable" wage increases can be considered by OPA for price "relief" purposes. The employer is told that as to these wage increases—and only as to these wage increases—a review of his price situation will be granted him when they are put into effect. The approving agency is a tripartite National Wage Stabilization Board of which, of course, labor is a part. Although this board is called a Wage Stabilization Board, it is in effect a price agency. It is designed to serve two purposes.

First, the board is to act as a buffer to OPA, as a means of taking the heat for price increases off OPA. It is the intention of the administration to encourage the board to disapprove for price "relief" purposes as many wage increases as possible. Of course, few employers whose wage increases are not approved by the Stabilization Board will be inclined to put them into effect.

Second, every wage increase which receives the mark of approval gets, with practical certainty, favorable OPA consideration for price "relief" purposes.

Thus, two equally poisonous objectives are achieved: wage increases are discouraged and applications for price rises are placed in a priority position.

If the meager concessions the board makes to the need for substantial wage increases were given immediate effect, it would be bad enough. But the destructive delays which this whole process involves constitute a serious independent source of danger. Consider this situation. Labor is now approaching the conclusion of a long and bitterly fought campaign for wage increases. But under the program embodied in the new executive order the mere winning of a promise of a wage increase through collective bargaining will be meaningless. Unions may have to wait for months and months while government technicians who think they know what is best police the sterile and artificial refinements in the order, debate endlessly as to whether a wage increase is part of a "pattern" or should be classed as the correction of an "inequity."

The present situation of the steel workers is a forerunner of what threatens other unions involved in the wage campaign. All too few people realize that about 100,000 steel workers are still on strike. In most instances, the employers involved in these struck plants are willing to grant the 18½-cent per hour increase on the basis of which the strike

Place: Park Avenue.

"Now if you'd ask me about the races —"

"I don't like your face, young man."

"I say free enterprise."

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of the steel producers was settled. In fact, Chester Bowles sent a letter to Philip Murray in which he indicated that a wage increase of 18½-cents per hour was "approvable" for all of the steel workers then on strike, with very minor exceptions. But the Wage Stabilization Board still argues bitterly as to whether a foundry is steel fabricating or steel processing. Weeks go by and workers remain on strike while the staff of the Wage Stabilization Board debate such profound questions as whether the manufacture of locomotives constitutes steel fabrication within the meaning of the order.

THE contempt which the administration has for the needs of workers was exposed by an announcement issued by President Truman on March 5. After receiving a delegation of representatives of the steel fabrication industry, he stated that the 18½-cent wage settlement was not intended to apply to steel fabrication. Coupled with this was a sprinkling of crocodile tears for the "plight of small business" and an incredible fatuous presidential statement that the steel workers now on strike should go back to work. Again the administration shows that lack of good faith toward labor, that subservience to monopoly capital, which is the hall-mark of its functioning. Again it shows that its "wage-price" policy is but a cheap gadget for buying off labor, a poorly concealed strike-breaking device.

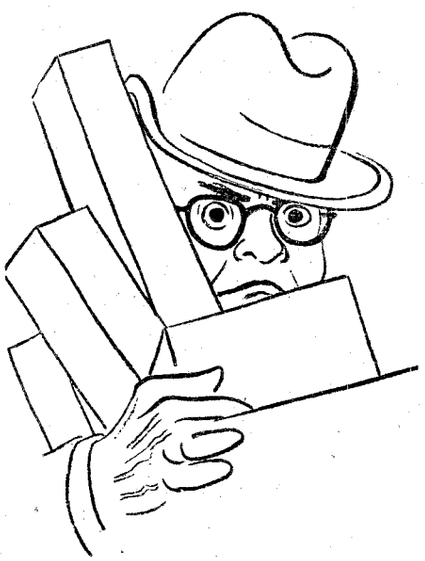
It is no secret that the integrated steel corporations themselves, to whom even the President would not deny that the 18½-cent settlement is applicable, are the largest and most important steel fabricators in the industry. Even the President cannot deny that the union would not have accepted his settlement had it been confined only to the integrated steel producers. For the scope of the strike embraced not only the 375,000 employees in the basic steel industry but an equal number in the steel fabrication industry. The President's new concern for small business blandly ignores the fact that employers in steel fabrication have multiplied their profits during wartime to astronomical proportions.

The fantastic quality of the wage-price executive order and the way in which it is rigged against wage increases was illustrated by the provision in General Order No. 1 of John Collet, former stabilization director, approving for price "relief" purposes pay increases up to 18½ cents per hour in the steel fabricating industry. This provision *withholds approval from increases to workers in the steel fabricating industry who are not on strike even though employers are prepared to give such increases.*

Here even the phony pretext of guarding against inflation cannot justify the distinction that is made. If an increase granted to a worker in settlement of a strike is not inflationary, then how does it become inflationary to grant the same increase to a worker in another plant doing the same thing who did not go out on strike?

The plain fact is that the whole order seethes with hostility to wage increases and contains limitless possibilities for robbing labor of part of its recent gains. As Philip Murray stated in his letter to Chester Bowles: ". . . any policy which requires approval by governmental agencies of a wage increase granted as the result of collective bargaining seriously undermines the freedom of American workers and destroys the value of collective bargaining. Having eliminated government intervention from the disputes phase of labor relations, it would be catastrophic to reintroduce it on the level of wage settlements. To do so would mean not only to abandon a fundamental premise of federal labor policy of encouraging collective bargaining to the widest extent possible, but also to invite destructive delays and inevitable confusion and strikes. . . . The CIO is unwilling to commit itself to an executive order based upon the view that wage increases obtained through collective bargaining are inflationary. The CIO is unwilling to commit itself to a recurrence of wartime delays in the processing of wage increases and in the policing of meaningless distinctions. Neither the labor movement nor the public as a whole can countenance a repetition of our wartime experience along these lines."

Prompt action is necessary to combat the attempts of the administration to place price tags on every bitterly-won wage increase. On the price side, labor should retain its leadership in the fight against profiteering and remember that if inflation comes, the workers will be the first to suffer. This means that labor needs to rally all progressive forces in the community to repel the incredibly vicious conspiracy of the National Association Manufacturers, the real estate boards and the reactionary leadership of the AFL and their mass lobbies for inflation.



"I'm in real estate myself."

"What are you doing tonight?"

"I get my steak regular."

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THE CREATIVE ROLE OF MARXISM

By RALPH BOWMAN

IN THE controversy over Albert Maltz's article in NEW MASSES it should be recalled that that article came in a discussion of an earlier one by Isidor Schneider (NM, Oct. 23, 1945). Mr. Schneider's article summarizing the problems and tasks of Marxist writers was based on a report he made during the discussion meetings on cultural problems that NM held during the period following the Duclos article on American Communists. Considering that these meetings were a part of a wider series of discussions conducted by NM editors and co-workers on the revision of Marxism it seems to me Mr. Schneider missed an excellent opportunity to illuminate the creative role Marxist science and philosophy play in the cultural sphere.

While I am by no means prepared to accept Mr. Schneider's sweeping premise that "no formulated Marxist criticism exists" in America and little elsewhere, even the implications of such a conclusion should lead to examination of the fundamental principles of Marxism and the measure to which these principles have or have not been understood and applied in the cultural sphere in general and to writing in particular. His ambitious recommendation that one of the main objectives of Marxist writers must be the creation of "Marxist principles of criticism" should require at the very least an exhaustive study of Marxist theory, its evaluation of culture and its relation to the real world. While I disagree with the main substance and the direction of Schneider's article my disappointment arises primarily from the absence of an analysis and evaluation of the past and present contributions of Marxist writers and the omission of any positive treatment of Marxism and its relation to the multitude of problems raised. Only the closing sentence indicates any recognition of that necessity: "The Marxist writer adds this to his advantage: his Marxist understanding enlarges his capacity to understand reality. Let him use it."

It may be argued that a responsible Marxist writer and editor addressing a gathering of Marxists engaged in the same field takes it for granted that all accept and understand the fundamental principles of Marxism and that no further discussion of their applicability to the problems in questions is needed. Such an assumption is, however, erroneous. The best proof that Marxist understanding is not a professional secret or a static quantity which can be taken for granted Mr. Schneider himself furnishes indirectly when he cites the sectarian errors Soviet writers (in common with nearly all cultural workers) made in the early thirties, more than a decade after the revolution. While it is true that the early leftist trends in Soviet culture took place under unprecedented conditions of transition to socialism, it is equally true that the source of these mistakes was an inadequate grasp of Marxist theory and its dialectic method. Even among Soviet writers many retained the non-Marxist ideology and habits of thinking and work assimilated in their pre-revolutionary youth. Profound theoretical-practical discussions in the cultural field were followed by equally profound polemics in the sphere of Marxist philosophy. And since Marxists rarely make the same mistakes twice Soviet culture has since grown and blossomed magnificently.

Howard Fast in his article "Realism and the Soviet Novel" (NM, Dec. 11, 1945) grasped the primary source of its vitality and robust realism when he pointed out that the Soviet writers' guide to understanding reality and embodying that understanding in their work is the scientific philosophy of dialectical materialism. While Fast gave only a few illustrations of how the dialectical method is applied by Soviet writers his article should be considered both a challenge and an invitation to American Marxist writers to examine further and to emulate the dialectic method of Soviet writers. It is no accident that Howard Fast should examine and appraise Soviet literature from the standpoint of Marxist theory, for that is precisely the source of the new vitality with which he has imbued the historical novel. I like to compare his novel on the Reconstruction period, *Freedom Road*, with James Allen's excellent Marxist evaluation of the same period. While one is a novel and the other a scientific historical study, both have added something new and enduring to the understanding and appreciation of a badly distorted period in our history, precisely because both were guided by Marxist science.

A Marxist writer dealing with the past is compelled to study Marxist theory together with the facts of history because that alone can give him a complete and true picture of the material, social and ideological forces operating in the period under consideration. If this is true in the treatment of history it becomes even more essential to treatment of the contemporary complex of social forces and developments and their effect on the thinking and actions of the individual. Every now and then Marxists engaged in cultural work complain that neither Marx, Engels nor Lenin have written books on culture as they did on theory, economics, history, philosophy, tactics, etc. While this complaint may have some validity in painting, music and sculpture, it cannot apply to literature.

Marxist writers, with their given skills and talents, seek to comprehend and interpret the same world, the same society and the same human beings that Marxists in the economic and political sphere strive to understand and to change. New adherents of Marxism usually begin their understanding of its substance by accepting the class struggle and the ultimate aim of socialism. As they study and come to understand Marxist science and philosophy more deeply they soon realize that Marxism embraces a far vaster range of knowledge—creating a totally new and incontrovertible world outlook. American Marxist writers to date have paid scant attention to the Marxist world outlook or its philosophy, dialectical materialism, leaving its treatment largely to specialists as if it were the sole concern of professional philosophers.

THAT is one reason why so few popular studies of dialectical materialism like Dr. Struik's excellent article on Engels (NM, Dec. 4, 1945) appear in Marxist publications. That is also one of the reasons why so few articles on cultural subjects display any theoretical depth and enduring qualities. In America we have had only a single book by an American Marxist (Howard Selsam, *What is Philosophy?*) on elementary problems of philosophy, in contrast to England, for example, where at least a half dozen have been published.

There are historic reasons for this general indifference to fundamental problems of theory. Engels noted this

(*Continued on page* 22)

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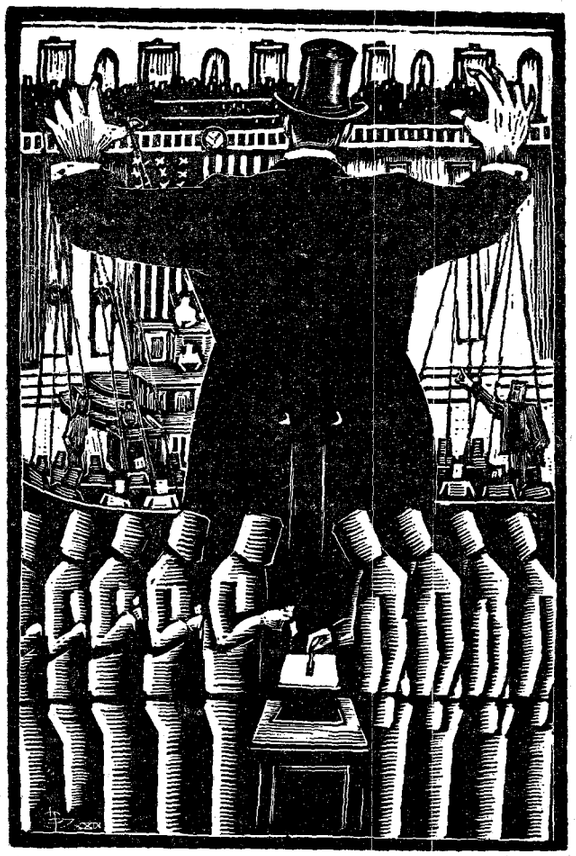

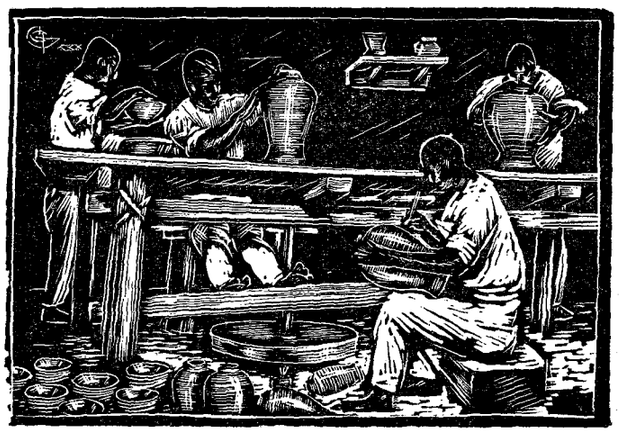

HENDRICK GLINTENKAMP
1887-1946

THE art world has lost a rare and gallant spirit in the death of Hendrick Glintenkamp. Painter, etcher, wood-engraver, cartoonist, illustrator, world traveler, author, teacher, "old Glint" was a sort of vagabond in the arts, free, unattached, a protagonist of no school. A pupil of Robert Henri, he inherited his master's genuinely liberal point of view on life and art. Big, lumbering, deep-voiced, one of the kindliest and most lovable of men, he was nevertheless a persistent and fearless fighter for causs that were near his heart. He believed in organizations of artists, in unions, in government sponsorship of art. He believed that art should serve the people. One of the earliest friends and contributors to the old *Masses*, a charter member of the John Reed Club, he was also one of the organizers of the American Artists Congress against War and Fascism and of the Artist's Union. When some leaders of the congress, at a critical time, vacillated, lost heart and resigned, thus splitting and almost destroying this important organization, old reliable Glint at the head of a few brave spirits assumed leadership and by his clarity of vision led it wisely until it merged with the Artist's Union.

He was a fine and talented artist. He is known mostly for his etchings and woodcuts, some of which appear on this page. Yet he was also an exceptionally gifted painter, His landscapes, mementoes of his travels, are especially fine. A rare friend and a loyal comrade, he was kind and helpful to young artists. His students adored him. He will be sadly missed by all.

MOSES SOYER.

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WHICH WAY UNO?

By THE EDITORS

EVEN before the curtain was lowered on the first sessions of the UNO in London, enough had taken place to indicate strongly that the organization was soon to reach a crossroads. Between then and the meeting of the Security Council in New York the indications (we write before the Council has been convened) have been transformed into definite trends—trends forewarning that unless powerful counter-measures are adopted to halt the drift toward war the UNO would become another pretty item in the historical archives.

The UNO, as we have often observed, is but a smaller image of the larger world. In it all the currents that sweep the globe find their reflections. And what the UNO reflects at this stage of its early life is the clear fact that cooperation among the Big Three for all practical purposes is almost non-existent. Without that cooperation the pyramid of peace has no solid base. It rests on quicksand. The basic issues before the UNO, therefore, are not the specific items on the Security Council agenda. They are actually outside; and the fundamental settlement of differences among the Big Three must come before the UNO can have the values outlined in its Charter. That is not to say that the UNO must hang in suspension; it is merely to stress that the UNO's effectiveness is totally dependent on the degree of harmony among the United States, the Soviet Union and Great Britain.

To define the problem in an even more elementary way, the UNO's future will be determined by whether Washington collaborates with Moscow. At this juncture the truth is that President Truman and Secretary Byrnes have abandoned the policy adopted by President Roosevelt. It was Roosevelt's abiding premise that a political *modus vivendi* with the USSR would bring the British into line for winning the peace. That premise has been tossed out the window by Roosevelt's successor and in its place there has been adopted a policy of working with the London Foreign Office in order to bring the Russians "into line." The character of this policy has been clearly visible for the past several months. Instead of bringing stability to world politics, it has brought the deepest anxieties and fears. Instead of making the UNO the kind of instrument it was designed to be, it is being refashioned into an instrument for war. As the toy of Anglo-American imperialism, the UNO faces bankruptcy, for we can be certain that none of the genuinely peace-loving states will forever remain in a condominium which threatens their security and equality as nations.

When President Truman informs Americans in effect that the UNO is the arena in which to adjudicate the crisis of the Big Three he is merely using another stick with which to beat the Russians. The UNO was not constructed to substitute for the continuation into the peace of the war-time alliance.

Why then does Truman insist on making the UNO the vehicle for all the complex problems which the Charter does not even envisage? He does it because he can corral blocks of votes, particularly in the Western Hemisphere, which, added to those under the sway of the British, will be used against the one power that stands as an impediment to imperialist ambitions on a world scale. American imperialism must make compromises when it undertakes direct negotiations with the USSR. In such negotiations imperialism's claws are cut and the world cannot be easily parcelled out as though it were so much real estate. But as American imperialism sees itself today it will not tolerate compromises. It intends either to rule or to ruin. Just as at the International Monetary Conference at Savannah the United States imposed its domination over the meeting and has almost absolute control over the Fund and Bank, it is also now attempting to do the same with the UNO. At the close of World War I Washington stayed out of the League of Nations in order not to be hindered in its efforts at world domination; now it seeks the same objectives through the Security Council and the General Assembly.

IN A case as clear as that of Franco Spain, the State Department refuses to allow the issue of Spanish fascism to be brought before the UNO and actually exerts enormous pressure on France to dissuade her from doing so. If France wants an American loan, our avaricious monopolists say that she cannot have it unless she goes along with the United States on the Spanish question. The whole fantastic issue of Iran is also used to poison the international atmosphere against the USSR. It has the double purpose first of destroying the USSR's demand for equality and, second, of warning the colonial world, where the USSR enjoys tremendous prestige, that Washington will fight any colonial groups which look to Moscow for sympathy and assistance in their quest for independence.

In his remarkable speech last week Senator Pepper defined what imperialism is trying to do with the UNO. He said that the UNO would be "wrecked if two of the Big Three under the cloak of United Nations Organization form another *cordon sanitaire* around the third of the big trinity. . . . You can no more expect Russia to accept her confinement behind the iron curtain of military and naval bases, fleets and air forces of Western European powers and the United States than you can expect her to take supinely her being shut in behind the curtain of atomic armaments." Referring to Soviet requests for Iranian oil concessions, Senator Pepper said: "I wonder what our attitude would be if the powers of the world had sought exclusive exploitation of the oil in Mexico, and the United States had been denied access to that area." This is a strong argument but it should be noted that if the USSR, a non-imperialist power, obtained oil concessions from Iran it would be on a fundamentally different basis from the way American imperialists exploited the oil resources of Mexico.

The whole weight of Pepper's speech was to save the UNO by demanding an American foreign policy of cooperation with the Soviet Union by restoring the base of Big Three friendship, without which the UNO becomes the repository of unfulfilled hope. The conspiracy to pervert the UNO into its opposite, into a madhouse of the disunited, can be laid directly at the doorstep of the White House. It is Truman's Secretary of State who was permitted to issue the false reports that the Red Army was marching on Teheran. From Byrnes' office came the note of protest to the USSR even when London was expressing doubts about the truthfulness of Byrnes' statements. For days Soviet troops were inching closer to the Iranian capital—but never got there; for days the Rus-

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sians were heading for the Turkish border—but never got there. All this panic was planned and perpetrated by the State Department without a qualm of conscience. It would not wait to find out that the Soviet troop movements were in fact preparatory to evacuation from Iran.

The UNO means something to millions throughout the world. But it will finally mean, as Stalin pointed out, only as much as the democratic, anti-imperialist forces make it mean. For the UNO to have value in helping keep peace a protracted struggle will have to be waged to save it from perversion by the atomic diplomats. And central to this unrelenting struggle is the need to weld the peace front at home. The Win-the-Peace Conference in Washington—April 5, 6, 7—is one step along this road. With wide and deeply rooted support it can help make the UNO what the world wants it to be.

NM SPOTLIGHT

The CIO Looks at Russia

THE official report of the CIO delegation on their first-hand observations of the Soviet trade unions last October becomes a mighty weapon for peace and Soviet-American friendship. Released by Philip Murray into the midst of the anti-Soviet crusade accelerated by Churchill's war inciting speech, this sober and factual report gives American labor and the people a simple and vivid picture of the role of the trade unions, with their twenty million members, in the socialist economy. The report was compiled by eleven experienced CIO trade union leaders of diverse political views and carries the authority of men concerned primarily with the rights and well-being of workingmen.

One striking conclusion from the report reads, "We were impressed with the character of the Soviet trade unions and with their many excellent activities in promoting the interests of the workers in the economic, social welfare and the cultural fields—as well as with the far-reaching character of the social insurance system they [the trade unions] operate, which is designed to protect working people and their families against all contingencies from the cradle to the grave."

Old friends of the Soviet Union have known these facts for over a quarter of a century. But because these simple facts of the everyday life of the Soviet workers and their trade unions have been kept from the millions of organized and unorganized American workers, the trustified commercial press has been able to vilify and caricature the Soviet Union. Now the organized workers have an eye-witness report from their own tried and trusted leaders and organizers. The simple elementary fact that the Soviet Union is a union country and that without an exception every economic enterprise has a collective agreement with the respective industrial union will be an eye-opener to millions of organized workers.

The report shows that every plant has its own shop committee (elected by secret ballot), department committees and shop stewards with real power to take up and solve grievances; that all workers receive from two to four weeks vacation with pay; that overtime is paid at time and a half and double time; that progressive piecework rates prevail, whereby a worker receives double and triple piece-rates for all units above the daily norm agreed upon by the union; that union dues are about one percent of wages; that rent is from five percent to fourteen percent of monthly earnings; that the unions administer all social insurance, which includes complete and free medical care, hospitalization, medicine, accident and death benefits for all union members and their families without any deduction from wages or any other kind of payment.

The reported list of benefits enjoyed by the Soviet workers is long and unprecedented and is growing year by year. The report gives some over-all national information as well as concrete information on a number of plants visited. Since this is a trade union report it is limited to union benefits and activities and necessarily omits such salient facts that all rights of labor are guaranteed by the Soviet Constitution and Soviet laws and enforced by courts and governing bodies in which workers and their elected leaders form the decisive majority. Another simple and illuminating fact omitted from the report and obscured by the venal press is that the Soviet Republics are workers' republics, and that the entire country, including the factories and mines, is in fact owned and operated by the working people for the benefit of all.

Several cases are cited of unexampled heroism of the Soviet workers during the war in carrying on production in factories under direct and constant artillery fire. Some interesting light is thrown on reconversion plans to peacetime production. In several plants visited reconversion plans were prepared as early as 1943 and now are in full swing, retarded only by a shortage of skilled labor. Despite virtual elimination of overtime, the wartime take-home pay has been maintained. Unemployment is non-existent. In their interviews and conversations the CIO delegation reports the existence of universal respect and friendship for American labor and the American people. A concluding paragraph states, "The peace and prosperity of our countries [the US and USSR] and of the world depend not only upon the cooperation of governments but even more upon the understanding and friendship which may be fostered between the working and common people of all countries. The CIO sent our delegation to the USSR to promote this purpose and our visit has added to our determination to continue its promotion in the future in every way we can."

This working-class report on the great socialist power comes as a breath of fresh air amid the poisonous fumes of anti-Soviet incitement now being generated by Churchill and his American friends, the men of the trusts. Labor, represented by its most progressive trade union wing, has thrown its hat into the ring for the big fight which is of decisive import for all Americans: will peace be won? In the stormy days ahead all other democratic sections of America will look to labor for leadership on the worldwide picketline for peace.

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READERS' FORUM

No Sale

TO NEW MASSES: I am enclosing a carbon copy of a letter which is largely self-explanatory.

Dear Mr. Browder: The other day I received your circular letter entitled "Appeal of Earl Browder to the Members of the C.P.U.S.A." I also note the handy coupon for enclosing remittances to defray expenses. I am not remitting, as I believe that you are spending your money foolishly.

I can't go along with you in your apparent views that the Communist Party should tag along after the Truman administration, right or wrong, in whatever it chooses to do. Can you point out any instances where the Communists have criticized points where the administration has been consistent with the policies of the Roosevelt-labor-democratic coalition? And yet you accuse the Party of treating the administration as the "chief enemy." By any chance, do you mean "Sh-h-h! The Boss is listening"? And in your circular letter, while you were quoting the *tactic* as adopted in the July convention, you left out a very important part: "*It is equally necessary that the people sharply criticize all hesitations to apply these policies, and vigorously oppose any concessions to the reactionaries. The camp of reaction must not be appeased—it must be isolated and routed.*" (P. 582, July *Political Affairs.*)

No, Mr. Browder, I am very sure that the Communist Party should get its eye back on the ball, never forgetting for a moment that in the history of all progress under capitalism, all gains were initiated and fought for by organized efforts of the working classes. Of course some "enlightened businessmen" (enlightened as to their own interests), when they are able to see the inevitable, quickly see the advantage of hopping on the bandwagon. Also, notice how quick they are to take credit for the gains! They start sending out little pamphlets describing their "liberal" policies to fellow-members of Associated Industries groups. (I am a file clerk: I file oodles of these.) And they give intermission talks on radio Symphony Hour programs. In those inner circles, this is known as "good-will advertising."

Also, I have filed (and read) too many National Association of Manufacturers bulletins and Associated Industries *bull* to think that capital and labor are in for a long postwar love-feast. Not without the most degrading sort of compromise on the part of the working classes. Have you been reading any of these bulletins lately, Mr. Browder? Don't they turn your stomach? In these they sometimes forget the good-will advertising and show their true colors. In short, I believe that 99 99/100 percent of all this "liberal" talk is pure good-will advertising.

I think this whole revisionist struggle is a matter of ideas, not personal stuff, as you make out. So stop being a "test case," because, Mr. Pied Piper, I don't think very many of us are following you. A man who is pledged to "make capitalism work effectively" (!) is *not* a Communist by any stretch of my very active imagination. So why should you want to pretend by holding a membership card?

BETTY ZATTERSTROM.

Joplin, Mo.

Ben Field: Town & Country

TO NEW MASSES: Ben Field's "I Stick to Piper Tompkins" (NM, March 26) was very interesting, but I often wonder why Ben Field doesn't stick to Brooklyn and city life. Now there's no doubt that Field knows farm life; yet on reading his stories and novels one gets the feeling he strains to be a farmer. After all, the fact remains that Field has been more or less of a part-time farmer, that the city is his home. I, for one, enjoy his farm novels; but how about a different theme, Ben? I always get the feeling that his farm novels are worked over too long, that he wants to make absolutely sure he has the background down to a T. I think Field could do a novel about Brooklyn which would be a kayo, because city life is something he knows and could write about without restraint. In such a novel, or story, I feel we would find that certain "sparkle" (which is a hell of a word) that *Piper Tompkins* lacked.

New York. FRANK PETERS.

B. Golden

Who Wants to Swap?

TO NEW MASSES: I am very glad to be able to tell you that at last I am now able to get NM regularly through an Oxford bookseller. For years I have been reading NM with great interest, and it is good to be able to get it again within two or three weeks. During the war, I moved around quite a lot in Europe and the Middle East, and NM still somehow managed to reach me, being sent on by a friend in India. When I came home I found a file of 1944 issues waiting for me . . . and I am still dipping into them!

I find NM very interesting and stimulating reading, although there was a time, during the "Browderization" period, when I did find it rather irritating; but now it seems better and more lively than ever. I like especially your international surveys and the literary articles and book reviews. It is a great pity that book imports and publication here of works from U.S.A. are so severely curtailed, while currency restrictions prevent me ordering books direct from the States. Would any of your readers be interested in a little exchange scheme in a few books on literary, sociological and political subjects and a few current pamphlets and papers on a value for value basis? I would very much like to have copies of books such as *The Works of Tom Paine*, or *The Chinese Labor Movement*, which are not yet published here, and would be only too happy to send in exchange any books asked for, or periodicals such as the *Labor Monthly* or the *Modern Quarterly*.

I hope NM will soon be available over here in greater numbers, as I feel it very necessary that the labor and progressive people in our two countries should know more about what each is doing in opposing imperialist politics and fighting for socialism and better conditions.

So more power to your elbow, NM. Carry on with the good work! With all best wishes to the paper. A. G. K. LEONARD.

P. S. A particular bouquet for your February 5 strike number, and for Aragon's article on Thorez, but I do not like Richard Boyer's style in his "World of Ships"!

London, England.

NM will forward any letters received. Please include proper postage.

Examples, Good and Bad

TO NEW MASSES: Your pages have been filled lately with considerable discussion of the question: where does Marxism come into the analysis of thought and culture? That is very healthful.

The strike stories you furnished during the past few weeks were one good example of

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This Week's Rankest

"Think of it—unable to choose your own doctor!"

practical work by Marxist writers. The record in literary controversy is not so impressive, but it is worth while if more essays like John Howard Lawson's come out of it.

Lawrence Gellert's contribution on the Negro question is, on the other hand, a poor sample of what should be done. It is bad as a matter of simple reportage in that it gives the reader the impression that Jim Crow was confined to posts in the South; not one story is set in the North. It is also weak in terms of Marxist theory, owing to its failure to mention incidents offering *hope*, events registering progress in consequence of struggle. A one-sided presentation undialectical; its most likely result, pessimism.

New York. STANLEY ARCHER.

Pamphlet Wanted

TO NEW MASSES: I trust you will find it possible to publish John Stuart's article *Behind Soviet Policy* [NM, March 12] in pamphlet form. It is an excellent and easily understandable reply to those people who presumably really do not understand "what the Russians are up to."

Detroit. M. J. KANE.

Creative Role of Marxism

(*Continued from page 17*)

weakness in the Anglo-American labor movement in the nineteeth century. Much of this weakness still persists, manifested in one-sided emphasis on practical activity and results coupled with skepticism about theory. Some of it undoubtedly may be laid to the influence of the prevailing pragmatist philosophy in our bourgeois-democratic culture unconsciously absorbed from the social environment. A further manifestation appears in mistaken tendencies to look on Marxist theory as dogmatic formulas or as venerated classics which have largely outlived their practical usefulness for present day problems. All these observations, which I have stated bluntly for emphasis, do not lead to the conclusion that American Marxist writers are not Marxists. Rather they point up the fact that mastery of Marxist theory, like the maturing of judgment and wisdom, is a long, difficult—an endless—process.

Marxism does not consist of ready-made formulas that need only be memorized to make one a Marxist. Marxism is primarily a materialist philosophy which is distinguished from earlier materialism by its dialectic approach to the comprehension of reality, a science of the laws of development of human society, including its culture, and a program of action designed to achieve socialism as the next historically-determined stage of social development. It represents the highest and most advanced development in the entire intellectual history of mankind. To workers in all cultural spheres Marxism offers inexhaustible creative treasures for understanding the living and changing phenomena of nature, society and human consciousness in all their endless and manifold interactions, conflicts and progress which we know as living reality.

Virtually all writers for NEW MASSES possess given levels of Marxist understanding, the full measure of which is reflected in their work over a period of time, even though little or no Marxist terminology is evident. Like their individual styles and talents Marxism is a part of their professional skill. It would be a valuable contribution if articles revealing and illustrating the substance and the method of Marxist evaluation in the various spheres of culture were published preliminary to more special studies. If NEW MASSES were to do this in a planned, systematic and organized manner it would become a more widely recognized Marxist guide and authority in the cultural field.

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REVIEW and COMMENT

THEY'VE TRIED IT BEFORE

Joseph North reviews Sayers' and Kahn's "The Great Conspiracy"

IF THERE is any way to get this book to millions (and I am sure there is) it must be done, and immediately.* Few recent books have had the timeliness, the force, the keen edge of truth, the expert craftsmanship of this work.

After listening to Winston Churchill's sinister rhetoric, I returned to some chapters of *The Great Conspiracy* describing his record as organizer of the intervention against the young Soviet Republic after World War I. The pages were as timely as this morning's headlines. These chapters, and all the others, supply a third dimension to events today, a historical foreground that should reach the eyes of millions who abhor the prospect of World War III. This book is a weapon for peace.

It scorches imperialism's warmongers with irrefutable fact. You run the gamut of the international rogue's gallery—the plotters of death and their underlings—here and throughout the world. *The Great Conspiracy* is the story of the unceasing conspiracy against the socialist sixth of the world, a plot spearheaded by the imperialist powers. Beginning in 1917, it brings you up to date, jamming your face into the front pages of today. And you will better understand what Wall Street and The City are up to. You will see how the marauders of the Big Money tried intervention before, and failed. You will see why they will fail again, if they try.

The Great Conspiracy recounts the record of that failure: but before the intervention ended, after World War I, 7,000,000 Russians lost their lives. About the same number were lost in World War II, many times more than the combined losses of America and Great Britain. You will see why the Soviet Union, as Eugene Tarle, the eminent historian, wrote recently in *Izvestia*, is determined to secure its borders despite every conceivable threat and brandishment of new-fangled weapons. If your next-door neighbor is an avid reader of the New York *Times* and swallows its lethal dose daily, give him this book as antidote.

To many who have never studied world events, who retain delusions that US foreign policy has nothing in common with imperialism, who believe the press releases, the demarches, the fine-sounding notes, the epic documents that pour endlessly from the State Department—*The Great Conspiracy* will be an eye-opener. They will get the low-down on another man from Missouri: the elderly, opinionated, poker-playing St. Louis banker David R. Francis, who represented the United States in Moscow during the ten days that shook the world. "Old Francis," a British diplomat remarked, "doesn't know a socialist-revolutionary from a potato." But the man from Missouri knew this much: something was happening outside his embassy windows that disturbed his Union League bones to the marrow. Something vast, something new in world history, some turning point in man's affairs—and he didn't like it. The people of one-sixth of the world were taking power: the class instincts of the St. Louis banker stirred feverishly. And he acted.

The chronicle of his acts sheds brilliant light upon those of his successors. Then, as today, State Department words were designed to conceal imperialist deeds.

Show these pages to your hypothetical neighbor: on Dec. 2, 1917, Francis sent a secret report to Washington about General Kaledin, organizer of a counter-revolutionary army among the Cossacks in southern Russia, which was preparing to march on Moscow. Kaledin's spies, Czarist officers in Moscow and Petrograd, had contact with the American ambassador. Secretary of State Lansing wired the American embassy in London recommending a secret loan to finance Kaledin's cause. This loan, the secretary said, was to be made through the British or French government. We, as usual, were to keep our skirts clean, operate only on a lofty, moral plane. "I need not impress upon you," added Lansing, "the necessity of acting expeditiously and impressing those with whom you talk of the importance of it not being known that the US is considering showing sympathy for the Kaledin movement, much less of providing financial assistance."

The Soviets, painfully alert to the possibility of Allied intervention, discovered the connections, and exposed the secret plot of Francis and Kaledin. The American ambassador indignantly denied everything. He cabled Lansing: "I am making a statement to the press . . . denying all connection or knowledge of Kaledin's movement stating your instructions are definite and emphatic not to interfere in internal affairs, stating I had observed same scrupulously." This may be described as the pattern of American imperialist diplomacy: unctuous word, murderous deed.

Such historic fact—culled from the actual records of the time (the authors supply a copious and painstaking bibliography of their source material)—cast brilliant light upon the current campaign against a Soviet Union accused of "expansionism," of "imperialism," whereas the Anglo-American marauders carry through their nefarious designs in the guise of "aiding democracy," "helping the small nations," etc., etc. In the holy name of democracy, they back the White Guards of today, the pro-fascists and fascists of the world—in the Balkans, in Greece, in Poland, in Spain, in Asia, everywhere throughout the globe where peoples march toward a greater measure of freedom.

So in 1919, Allied statements denied any intention of armed intervention against the Soviets, or of interfering in Russia's internal affairs; but by summer of that year, the armed forces of *fourteen* states stood on Russian soil, without declaration of war. The most lofty reasons were advanced: they had come to prevent supplies from falling into German hands; they had come to help the Czechoslovakian armies stranded in Siberia to withdraw from Russia; they had even come to "help" the Russians "restore order" in their troubled land.

Every reason but the truth. And cynically, brazenly, Churchill could not resist confessing in his book, *The World Crisis: The Aftermath*. "Were they [the Allies] at war with Russia? Certainly not; but they shot Soviet Russians at

* *The Great Conspiracy*, by Michael Sayers and Albert E. Kahn. Little, Brown. $3.50.

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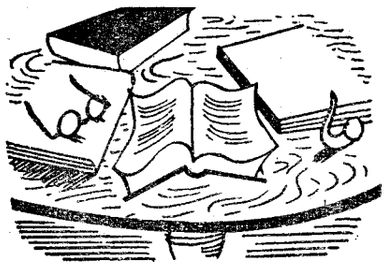

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sight. They stood as invaders on Russian soil. They armed the enemies of the Soviet government. They blockaded the ports and sunk its battleships. They earnestly desired and schemed its downfall. But war — shocking! Interference — shame! It was, they repeated, a matter of indifference to them how Russians settled Russian affairs. They were impartial—bang!"

As I write, today's front pages have photographs of Herbert Hoover taking off for Europe. There is a broad grin on his face: he seems happy to pick up where he left off after World War I. The man sent by President Truman to "feed" Europe's starving millions is the man who said at the Paris Peace Conference, "Bolshevism is worse than war." And as the authors indicate, his definition of Bolshevism is broad enough to include any movement that strives for some greater degree of freedom, of economic betterment. Sayers and Kahn indicate that Hoover has not only a class interest in plotting against Soviet Russia: there is something neurotically personal about it. Together with British multimillionaire Leslie Urquhart, Hoover had by 1912 won profitable concessions from the Czarist regime involving properties estimated at a billion dollars. After the Revolution all the concessions were abrogated. And, as the authors point out, "whatever his personal motive may have been . . . American food sustained the White Armies in Russia and fed the storm troops of the most reactionary regimes in Europe which were engaged in suppressing the upsurge of democracy after the First World War. Thus American relief became the weapon against the peoples in Europe." These facts are amply documented, and proof is supplied to all who seek truth.

Scarcely a chapter in the book fails to throw light on today's headlines. Another instance: you can show that *Times*-reading neighbor of yours the following: on Dec. 23, 1917, the day after the first session of the preliminary Brest-Litovsk peace conference, representatives of Great Britain and France met in Paris and secretly concluded an agreement to dismember Soviet Russia. The agreement was titled *"L'accord francais-anglais du 23 decembre 1917, definissant les zones d'action francaises et anglaises."* According to its terms, England was to receive a "zone of influence in Russia, giving her the oil of the Caucasus, and control of the Baltic provinces"; France, a "zone giving her the iron and coal of the Donetz basin and control of the Crimea." *The oil of the Caucasus . . .* does this throw any light on events in Iran today, the land so near Baku's oil wells; Iran, where traditionally Britain's imperialists fomented disorder and strife so that this door to Soviet oil would continue to remain ajar? In 1919 Iran was the *place d'armes* for British and Indian troops to attack the Soviet armies in Baku.

Writing of Brest-Litovsk, the authors introduce you there to the treasonous Trotsky, who disobeyed the instructions of the Soviet government and double-crossed Lenin. Sayers' and Kahn's chronicle of Trotsky and his co-conspirators is perhaps the clearest, most telling account that has yet appeared by American writers. Here in explicit, yet succinct detail, you read the story of a treachery rarely, if ever, equalled in history.

The book dramatically shows you the devious, treasonous road Trotsky traveled—a road that wound through every imperialist chancellery of the world, and especially to that of Hitler. On page 285, the testimony of Valentine Olberg, the German Trotskyite who had been sent into the Soviet Union by Trotsky himself, is most revealing:

Vyshinsky, the prosecutor: What do you know about Friedmann?

Olberg: Friedmann was a member of the Berlin Trotskyite organization who was also sent to the Soviet Union.

Vyshinsky: Are you aware of the fact that Friedmann was connected with the German secret police?

Olberg: I had heard about that.

Vyshinsky: Connections between German Trotskyites and the German police —was that systematic?

Olberg: Yes, it was systematic and it was done with Trotsky's consent.

Vyshinsky: How do you know that it was done with Trotsky's knowledge and consent?

Olberg: One of the lines of connection was maintained by myself. My connection was established with the sanction of Trotsky.

Vyshinsky: Your personal connection with whom?

Olberg: With the fascist secret police.

Vyshinsky: So it can be said that you yourself admit connections with the Gestapo?

Olberg: I do not deny this. In 1933 there began organized systematic connection between the German Trotskyites and the German fascist police.

These are the facts, and objective observers understood them. The authors cite Ambassador Davies' testimony to that effect, when he declared in a confidential dispatch to Secretary Hull that

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practically every member of the diplomatic corps believed "that the proceedings established clearly the existence of a political plot and conspiracy to overthrow the government."

But powerful forces conspired then, as today, to hide the truth. On March 11, 1937, Ambassador Davies noted in his Moscow diary the remark of a diplomat who said that though practically all the corps agreed on the defendants' guilt, "the outside world, from press reports . . . seemed to think that the trial was a put-up job (facade, as he called it): that while he knew it was not, it was probably just as well that the outside world should think so."

This is characteristic of the way capitalist observers, in overwhelming majority, have operated. And Trotsky's followers and admirers in this country have continued the most virulent, mad-dog campaign against the Soviet Union: Max Eastman, William Henry Chamberlin, the other worthies of the *New Leader;* James Farrell and other gangsters of the pen, as Stalin has called them. And now a New York publishing house is preparing Trotsky's "biography" of Stalin! As enemies of the Soviet Union, they also subvert all that is decent, progressive in American life today. Their wrecking activities in labor, in culture, in everything they touch, must be made clear to all the people so that they stand exposed as the enemies of mankind, which history has already demonstrated them to be.

SPACE does not permit further details of this splendid book. Suffice it to say that it does a most necessary job at this crucial moment in history. It will help orient any reader to an understanding of the headlines today, put him on guard against the warmongers and the fascist-minded.

The book does more: it helps every honest American understand the words of Col. Raymond Robins, who went to Russia as chief assistant to the head of the American Red Cross. He wrote: "Soviet Russia exploits no colonies, seeks to exploit none. Soviet Russia operates no foreign trade cartels, seeks none to exploit. Stalin's policies have wiped out racial, religious, national and class antagonisms within the Soviet territories. This unity and harmony of the Soviet peoples point the path to international peace."

Colonel Robins described what mankind must learn: that a socialist nation is the strongest bulwark of world peace, global security. It is the future: hence imperialism's driving hatred.

Troubled Journey

WASTELAND, *by Jo Sinclair. Harper. $2.50.*

THE wasteland of Jo Sinclair's novel is real enough. You will find it marked on all good sociological maps of America, together with the Negro wasteland. It is the great lowland of Jewish-American life. The same area was marked out by Michael Gold more than fifteen years ago in his *Jews Without Money*. Like Gold, Jo Sinclair is intent on depicting the life of the Jewish poor. Outside of this general similarity, however, no other comparison is possible. Gold dealt openly with the human elements of this poverty. The ambition of Jo Sinclair is larger. With a decade of popularization of the psychoanalytic technique in this country, Jo Sincalir's theme is the inner structure of a sector of Jewish life; she wants to yield a glimpse of the withering of personality by the anti-cultural, discriminatory, insecure scheme of things in which her people live. Even more specifically, her purpose is to indicate the collapse and destruction of the family relationship. The relation of fathers and mothers to children, and of brothers and sisters to each other are filled with resentment, mistrust and even hatred. Each struggles with the external world and looks at the other with a preoccupied glare.

This sounds like the announcement of a major theme. There can be no quarrel with Jo Sinclair's purpose. Most American Jews of lower middle- and working-class origin will be painfully aware of this wasteland, and will recognize the true familiarity of Jo Sinclair with a certain universe. Yet, having with courage chosen a major theme, she has failed to realize it adequately. She uses psychoanalysis as the means of exploding into reality the ravelled mystery of Jake Braunawitz' life. Jake is sick: an embittered, hard-drinking, lonely newspaper photographer working, in fear of losing his job, under the alias of John Brown. His sister sends him to a psychoanalyst; and in the process of analysis we are given a reenactment of his family's life.

There need be no argument with this device per se. But any literary form must in the end produce the satisfying effects of any other. If, from the psychoanalytic couch, character, climax and perception can arise, Jo Sinclair has not made them arise—which does not mean that this is impossible. In the end *Wasteland* fails to accumulate the climactic power and characterization that are basic for any good story.

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in this harsh and humorous account of a farmer boy's progress, and of life in a munitions factory."—KENNETH HORAN, *Chicago Tribune.*

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If science is used in fiction it must be accurate science. Psychoanalysts will dismiss the obvious short-cutting and inadequate usage of the technique in *Wasteland*. Jake Braunawitz does not run the true gamut of unravelling by which he might have triumphantly perceived the world he lived in. Psychoanalysis set contrapuntally against living experience might have achieved a high degree of realism, but this is not achieved here.

Miss Sinclair exhibits a most peculiar courage: it is sufficient to enable her to embark on a voyage through a painful area of experience, but not sufficient to face up squarely to that experience. The apparent center of the story is Jake Braunawitz, but Jake is often nothing more than an opaque screen through which we glimpse the impasse of his sister—who is sensed as the true center. The impasse of the sister is Lesbianism. Had the story been projected through her it might have conceivably achieved more sharpness of outline. As revealed here, through the uncritical emotionalism of Jake, she is merely disturbing. The story reverts to her obliquely, and with an uneasy self-consciousness that infects the reader. She is never thoroughly understood or realized, but she is around enough to give a lopsided effect to the story, like a picture hung awry on a wall.

Altogether *Wasteland* is a troubled and troubling story. I would say it is worth reading, not as a great or even a very good story, but as a glimpse into a boiling cauldron.

ALFRED GOLDSMITH.

India

BRITISH SOLDIER IN INDIA: The Letters of Clive Branson. *International*. 40c.

IN CLIVE BRANSON'S letters from India the reader finds himself on a voyage of discovery under the guidance of a perceptive mind. A London artist and Communist, Branson had fought the fascists in Spain with the International Brigade and a few years later was training to fight them in India. Upon his arrival he sees "the one problem that strikes you in the face—the life of the peasantry. . . . Everyone was filled with amazement at the appalling conditions in which the people live. . . . After 175 years of imperialism in India, the conditions are a howling disgrace." He tries patiently to explain the meaning of these conditions to his fellow-soldiers. He is profoundly disgusted with the attitude of the British *sahib* toward the Indians. He makes friends with the Indians, reads their press, tries to learn their language. The fruits of that reading and contact are related here.

Being an artist he makes sketches and builds friendships among Indian artists and their families. Humanity pervades his approach, as when he is "continually struck by the extraordinary dignity of the little girls here."

But most of his letters are taken up with analyzing and describing the meaning of imperialism to the Indian masses. "They [the British] treat the Indians in a way which not only makes one tremble for the future but which makes one ashamed of being one of them." He describes the fight of the Indian Congress for emancipation; he establishes contact with the trade union movement and with members of the Indian Communist Party and reports the Party program and activities and the difficulties under which they work. His letters on the terrible Bengal famine expose its real causes.

In February, 1944, Branson was killed in action. How great was the loss to the progressive movement can be judged from these letters. In their humanity, their simplicity, their direction into the life of the problem, their clarity, they constitute a lucid introduction to the whole problem of India. They are a fitting legacy of a great person.

LOUIS HARAP.

Poverty on the Farm

SEASONAL FARM LABOR IN THE UNITED STATES, *by Harry Schwartz. Columbia University Press. $2.25.*

THIS work is a model dissertation —well-written, thoroughly documented and meaty. It is a careful study of the most exploited wage laborers in America, the over 3,000,000 hired seasonal farm workers—men, women and children, Negro and white, from Florida to Washington, from California to Maine, whose average *annual family* income has hovered around $500 for the past forty years.

As the author points out, only one thing has kept these people at their miserable tasks—"They had to accept farm work in preference to complete unemployment and want." The growers represent big business, for in typical seasonal labor crops, like fruits and vegetables, expenses per acre are measured in hundreds of dollars, and original investment runs into many tens of thousands of dollars.

The growers have been united for fifty years to control wage levels and have used lies, violence and police power to break workers' efforts to organize and better their conditions. The struggles of the latter, in the face of great difficulties, have been repeated and heroic, but rarely successful. The result may be summarized in two figures—in 1916 the hourly farm wage was sixteen cents, and in 1938 the hourly farm wage was—sixteen cents.

The National Association of Manufacturers, viewing these results with admiration, has recently formed a "Committee on Cooperation with Agriculture," the millionaire growers of which have been behind the much publicized "farmers' " vigilante movement against organized labor. It certainly behooves organized industrial labor to counter this move by attempting again to assist its rural brothers to attain decent living standards. The facts and figures in Schwartz's book would help such an effort.

HERBERT APTHEKER.

Droopy Love-Stuff

THE STARS INCLINE, *by Clyde Brion Davis. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.75.*

THERE is some attempt at a serious approach to reality at the beginning of this book, when, for approximately a chapter, the author does some realistic foundation laying for what are propounded as the problems of a war correspondent home from battle, dislocated from his normal mores and the victim of a faithless wife. This flicker of purpose does not last. Beginning with the second chapter, in a series of flashbacks to his former life, the plot thickens into a pulpy concoction. The narrative is reminiscent of the very worst found in the slick sunshine magazines, with the style sometimes rising to the level of *Cosmopolitan*, more often sinking to sub-pulp. The denouement, when the disillusioned reporter and the faithful, healthy, but not too pretty girl he has abandoned for the fleshpots are about to be reunited, is worthy of an illustration by the artist who does the Bobbsy Twins.

KURT CONWAY.

Worth Noting

FROM picket lines and community centers to Carnegie Hall — that's the journey being made by Stage for Action on Sunday, March 31, at 8.30 PM, when "Theater Parade" goes on view. Featuring name stars and just plain Joes alike, "Theater Parade" is a panorama of Stage for Action's activities during the past two years. Tickets are $1.20 to $3.60.

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SIGHTS and SOUNDS

MOURNING BECOMES O'NEILL

By ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

ERWIN PISCATOR'S Theater Workshop has been giving a weekend repertory of productions illustrating the history of drama. Most of the performers are student actors and the settings often have a crude home-made look. But the imagination in the directing and the spontaneity in the performances set them far above analogous Broadway offerings. By comparison with the Theater Workshop production of the Chinese drama, *The Chalk Circle*, Broadway's lavish *Lute Song* is cluttered and banal; and alongside its gay *Twelfth Night*, the Theater Guild's *Winter's Tale*, in comparable comedy scenes, is heavy and forced.

Theater Workshop's recent production of Eugene O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra* provides an occasion for a reevaluation of "the dean of American playwrights." It is a skillfully condensed version that brought the trilogy into an endurably proportioned theater evening, and made the most of its possibilities. And the play itself has been generally regarded by critics (though I am sure that assessment will be revised) as O'Neill's finest work. With this estimate O'Neill is in agreement, according to a letter quoted by Arthur Hobson Quinn in his *History of the American Theater*.

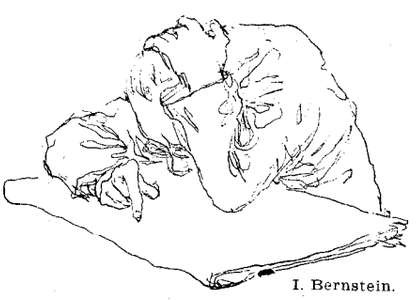
Mourning Becomes Electra caused an immense stir during its original run, but it is difficult now to understand the excitement. It provides another piece of evidence of the large share that immediate social context and sheer novelty have in the impact of a new work. Fifteen years later, with the novelty worn off and in another social context, *Mourning Becomes Electra* appears a pretentious intellectual melodrama, embarrassingly clumsy in its handling of ideas. All that remains admirable in the work is its ambition. It has the glamor of a really *big* failure. The attempt to dramatize psychoanalysis by modernizing classic Greek tragedy, whose legends have something of the status of ritualized dreams, was certainly a sizable undertaking.

The chosen legend was that of the murder of Agamemnon, on his return from the Trojan war, by his wife Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthus, and the vengeance taken on the murderers by the son and daughter of the fateful family, Orestes and Electra. The chosen version is that of Aeschylus, whose trilogy is fairly closely followed in the structure of *Mourning Becomes Electra*.

But *Mourning Becomes Electra* is not an adaptation of the Greek tragedy; it is a wholly new play. Its characters are Americans. The war from which its military leader returns is the American Civil War. The names, despite the play's title, carry only an alliterative suggestion of the Greek originals: Agamemnon becomes Ezra Mannon, Clytemnestra Christine, Orestes Orin, and Electra Lavinia. In the plot's unfoldment, the sister displaces the brother as the central figure; and the capitalist fatalism, which the early misunderstandings of Freudian psychology bolstered, that men succeed or fail according to "what's in them," displaces Greek fate.

In the case of *Mourning Becomes Electra*, "what's in them" most compulsively is the incest drive. O'Neill's script virtually megaphones the incest motivations to his public; and the audiences of fifteen years ago seem to have taken them as great truths, blurted out under tragic compulsions. Today, after the fifteen intervening years of intellectual assimilation of the Freudian ideas, O'Neill's treatment sounds painfully crude. The Electra portrayal is a case history; and Orin's lines almost have the effect of tableau announcements: "I am the victim of an Oedipus complex; I hate my father and am in love with my mother."

But the psychoanalytic novelties in *Mourning Becomes Electra* do not alone account for the stir caused by the play. It is significant that the production came in 1931. According to Quinn, O'Neill had spent two years on its composition: that is, the first two paralyzing years of the depression. Something else than "the fate and furies working within the individual soul," which O'Neill said he sought to realize, had got into the play—the hopelessness and bewilderment of the capitalist depression. An average 1931 audience would be in rapport with an author who saw life in such terms.



I. Bernstein.

Aeschylus had ended his tragedy with the transformation of the Furies into goddesses of justice. O'Neill ends with a despairing woman entombing herself in a shuttered house—Greek Fate modernized into the latest mode of capitalist fatalism.

There had been a time when O'Neill had been, to a considerable degree, a social dramatist embodying aspects of the class struggle in both realistic and symbolic terms. This quality of his work receded as he himself receded from the life of the sea which had been its origin. The recession was also a turning inward. O'Neill's work became heavy with the prevailing bourgeois sense of guilt and retribution which, in his literary career, came to its climax in *Mourning Becomes Electra*.

Psychoanalysis, however, proved too stubbornly scientific to serve as an escape from reality. It was later to prove so, too, for the infinitely trickier and more dangerous deserter from reality, Arthur Koestler. For both it was not science that they wanted, but mysticism. O'Neill's next serious play, after *Mourning Becomes Electra*, was the "Catholic morality," *Days Without End*.

In the letter in which O'Neill referred to *Mourning Becomes Electra* as his best play, he also acknowledges himself "deeply dissatisfied. It needed great language to lift it beyond itself. I haven't got that." The self-criticism is just. The language of *Mourning Becomes Electra* is embarrassingly insufficient.

But O'Neill had "great language" when he drew it from a living source—the speech of working seamen. One has only to read his early plays of the sea alongside the stiff, symbol-weighted lan-

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guage of the later plays to see how much O'Neill lost.

In the same letter O'Neill went on, in an attempt at admitted "self consolation," to say: "I don't think from the evidence of all that is written today that great language is possible for anyone living in the discordant, broken, faithless rhythm of our time. The best one can do is to be pathetically eloquent by one's moving dramatic inarticulations."

One wonders if O'Neill understood all of that confession. Turning from the complex realities of the class struggle had only taken him into an inner chaos, to his "inarticulations." It was a "faithless" time because, had he known it, he had broken faith. What he had substituted for "faith" was the sorry fraud of Catholic mysticism.

Symbolism and Surrealism in the Dance

By Francis Steuben

IT IS curious how many people have accepted Martha Graham as High Priestess of the Modern Dance and how few can really claim to understand her rites. The critics themselves are subject to this schizophrenic indulgence, as indicated by their reviews of "Dark Meadow," which had its first performance this season during a two-week repertory run at the Plymouth Theater. The metropolitan reviewers were almost unanimous in their praise of a "major dance work," yet many reluctantly admitted they didn't know what it was all about.

The cryptic "libretto" states: "The action of 'Dark Meadow' is concerned with the adventure of seeking. This dance is the reenactment of the Mysteries which attend that adventure." Now, Webster says that mysteries are "rites to which only privileged worshippers are admitted, after preparatory ceremonies and under obligations of secrecy." It is a tribute to the hold Miss Graham has on her passionate devotees that the worshipful atmosphere implied in the definition prevailed in the theater during the performance.

Under no obligations of secrecy, I confess that the heavy burden of symbolic decors, both portable and stationary, which was borne by "Dark Meadow" served to cancel out almost all of its kinesthetic dynamics. There are passages in the opera which communicate themselves visually to the onlooker as exciting figurations, notably in the group sections; and Erick Hawkins does some of his best dancing as the protagonist in "He Who Summons." But having granted that, I must frankly admit resentment at having to pierce through a mumbo-jumbo of symbols—Dionysian or Freudian—in order to fit them into the pattern or the purpose of the argument.

Miss Graham's use of esoteric objects—little beribboned darts, angular branches shooting out from behind scenes—undoubtedly mystify the innocent and titillate the initiate, but I find it inartistic and old-fashioned, in addition to being distracting. "Dark Meadow" makes a fetish of fetishes.

The modern dance has had a hard time establishing direct lines of communication with its audience. The past decade has seen a prolonged struggle on the part of dancers to arrive at a more evocative and a more communicative language of gesture. Witnessing the dance rendered sterile by private obscurities, and seeing this rendition receive critical acclamation, I wonder whether the modern dance is not now beating a retreat.

ONE swallow doesn't make a summer and one schooner used as headgear doesn't make a surrealist ballet. But such cautious reservation seemed beyond the discernment of the reviewers of George Balanchine's new work, "The Night Shadow," playing at the City Center in the Ballet Russe program. Since its opening episode was a masked ball, with fantastic costuming and plumage, and since Balanchine has composed surrealist ballets with fantastic costuming, the critics assumed, willy-nilly, that here was another one of those things. Why should they use critical perception when a ready-made category, so handy for reviewers, was already around into which to shove the new work?

"Night Shadow," far from being surrealist, is unabashedly romantic and sentimental in its handling of a traditional nineteenth century theme. The Poet is fascinated by the ethereal beauty of the Sleepwalker who, unknown to him, is wife of his host. The Coquette, toward whom the Poet had formerly been ardent, betrays him to the husband, who murders the Poet. The Night Shadow bears her dead lover away. It's a variation on an old, old theme—in balladry, opera, folk song.

Balanchine, in his own way, has made

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it a sensitive period piece, and has given it a poignancy seldom seen in ballet and even less frequently found in Balanchine himself. True, the divertissements at the *bal masque* are terribly clever and witty —no unusual achievement for Balanchine. Beyond that, however, the work has something more subtle and warm to recommend it: theme and treatment have a poetic verisimilitude as moving as it is unpretentious.

Danilova's characterization of the Sleepwalker is a brilliant *tour de force* for dancer as well as choreographer. She seems to glide through material things as easily as through space — to look through her lover rather than at him. The engrossing *pas de deux* between her and the Poet is a high point of nuance and inventive gesture. "Night Shadow" deserves to exist for a long time in the company's repertoire on its unique merits, aside from the fact that it presents a new facet in Balanchine's versatile talents.

Middle-Age in Hollywood

"JOURNEY TOGETHER" (Gotham) is a British semi-documentary film dealing with the training methods of the Royal Air Force. It is a well-made, interesting picture, produced, written, acted and directed by members of the RAF. It is based on the tired formula wherein the apprentice, busted as a flyer, is finally convinced that navigation, gunnery, etc., are just as noble as piloting. The high spot of the film is a beautifully directed sequence of the foundering of a disabled bomber at sea.

Another British item, *Vacation from Marriage* (Loew's State), starts with high promise but fizzles out into an average dud. It concerns the drab lives of a clerk and his wife who are facing middle age with dull hopelessness. Then comes the war, and suddenly, as members of the British armed forces, they discover their romantic potential. War becomes the great catalytic agent that can transform a meager present into a sparkling future. Naturally both principals are now allergic to their pre-war existence, with its mean one-room flat, the deadly clerical job, the drudging housework. But apparently, they don't need much to tackle the problem of a richer postwar existence. Just some snappy dressing, smart talk, and the ability to order drinks in proper fashion. The small matters of a different job, better wages and how to get them, etc., are never mentioned.

I wonder what the producers would have done with a couple who faced no such prospects of transformation? They would have had either to abandon the theme or else make an honest film showing the inevitable fate of millions of such people under our blessed way of life. I doubt if the second type of picture would have been made. I can recall practically no films dealing with the problems of the middle-aged and the ageing. One exception was the pre-war *Make Way for Tomorrow*, a touching movie in which an old couple are separated and forced into Homes for the Aged. Another was the recent *Mr. Winkle Goes to War*, where the war brought opportunities for inventiveness to an oldster. There are, of course, the occasional films in which the chief character, well out of the bobby-sock class, tries frantically to get back in, such as in the Victor Moore type of opus. Then there are the Edward G. Robinson pictures. Robinson, however, is an anomaly—the only middle-aged box office star who is cast as such. In his films, also, the genuine problems of the middle-aged are avoided. As in his last two films, *Woman in the Window* and *Scarlet Street*, he is used as the Horrible Example of the older man who strays into forbidden pastures.

What are valid themes of middle-aged life? They lie in the area of dramatic material of the forty to sixty age group who feel that their hopes for any substantial achievement are fast dwindling because their time is beginning to run out. Valid subjects could be found in the unfair competition this group is forced to face with younger, more energetic men and women, in the constant fear of being thrown upon the heap of the-no-longer-wanted, in a future faced without confidence or security.

THAT Hollywood has no intention of examining this stratum of human existence is shown in its treatment of male actors over thirty, and of women aspirants over twenty-five. Unless the actor beyond these ages is a well-established theatrical star, he or she hasn't a ghost of a chance. A youngster may win a beauty contest, or possess the well-defined charms needed by juvenile or ingenue, but the older person has only his acting ability, a virtue thus far unassessed on the West Coast.

Ask the question why this is so, and you land at bedrock. Hollywood aims to hypnotize, to make life beautiful: and audiences cannot be hypnotized by the problems of the old folk, nor life made beautiful by the worries of a graying waitress. Not every middle-aged couple can depend upon war to save them from the doldrums. The problems of older people cannot always be solved by magic

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formulas. Cinderella belongs to the young. If tackled frequently, the problems of the middle-aged might have to be treated with a modicum of honesty, and you couldn't do that without some hint at basic social truths. I am afraid that Hollywood will continue to use older actors only as parents, guardians, as dispensers of money and advisors to the glamorettes and kiss-fools. The film industry is taking no chances.

POPCORN is a popular confection that gets between your teeth and is absolutely lacking in food value. When taken in heavy quantities, it interferes with your appetite for serious food.

Here is the latest batch of Hollywood popcorn: *Gilda* (Music Hall), *Cinderella Jones* (Strand), *Whistle Stop* (Globe), *Sentimental Journey* (Roxy), *Road to Utopia* (Paramount). *Road to Utopia* is the best of the above. It is less pretentious than the others and is frankly out for laughs and nothing more. Crosby and Hope, aided by Lamour, are expert performers who make their material, some of it very old, look better than it is. They are slick vaudevillians, and as such are able to do a fine takeoff on an old-fashioned vaudeville turn. But even they can only make their stuff stand up for about two reels, after which it becomes thin and repetitive. One serious objection is their extremely self-conscious style. They invest their technique with an air that continually says, "Aren't we cute?" JOSEPH FOSTER.

Music

THE second annual award of the George Gershwin Memorial — a $1,000 prize offered by the B'nai B'rith Victory Lodge—went to Harold Shapero for a *Serenade in D*. This work was performed, among other numbers, by the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, led by Leonard Bernstein, at Carnegie Hall, on March 16. The entire program, in which Mr. Shapero's piece was somewhat lost, was poorly chosen, skimpy in content, and unclear as to its purpose. Harold Shapero's *Serenade*, I understand, is a portion of a longer suite for strings; and it would be very difficult to decide from this parsimonious fragment what the actual merits of the work as a whole might be. It is a pretty thing, showing a talented as well as an eclectic hand (the discipleship seemed to me to run all the way from Hugo Wolf to the latest of Russians). I have no quarrel with the judges, whoever they are, since I don't know the quality of the other compositions submitted. But I fail to see

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the relation of this work to (a) George Gershwin, or those things for which Gershwin stands: folk-quality, imaginative interest in America, creative energy; and (b) to the B'nai B'dith. The trouble may lie with the donors, who may not be exactly sure what it is that they are looking for in music. The present composition might (and could) have been written in Buenos Aires, Milan, or Chicago.

I had a better opportunity of gauging Shapero's talents at a subsequent concert, that of the League of Composers at Times Hall. Here he was represented by two piano sonatas, which he himself performed. These bore out the tentative conclusions which were drawn from a hearing of his string *Serenade*. Shapero knows his piano, he writes with skill, his materials are clearly planned, and he has all the latest composers at his fingertips. But so far as I can see, there is no inner conviction, no emotional glow to animate the writing. This is the kind of emotional self-denial which, I regret to say, characterized practically all of that evening's program. With the exception of the melodious *Partita*, for string quartet, flute, oboe, and harpsichord, which at least reveals a sense of humor as well as some verve, the rest was as programmatically dispassionate and "objective" as a Mondrian. The composers — Lous Harrison, Virgil Thomson, and the French *wunderkind*, Olivier Messiaen—are awfully clever, but the life-blood is drained out of them. Their musical speech is now current coin in all academic halls and wherever else music is being made. They have years of study behind them, and all the techniques of modern composition at their command. All they need is life.

It is hard to believe that Liszt has been dead only sixty years. It seems more like a hundred and sixty. The Rochester Philharmonic and Mr. Bernstein paid tribute to his memory at Carnegie Hall, on March 15, by presenting the choral symphony, *Faust*. But no amount of enthusiasm and devotion will ever breathe life into those dead bones. *Faust* —like so much else that Liszt composed —is dead, and a frightful bore from beginning to end. It is the perished monument to Liszt's musical megalomania. The orchestra played well, the Schola Cantorum and Mr. Romolo de Spirito sang beautifully, but as the evening wore on it became apparent that the best way of keeping the legend of Liszt alive is to perform his works as rarely as possible. FREDERIC EWEN.

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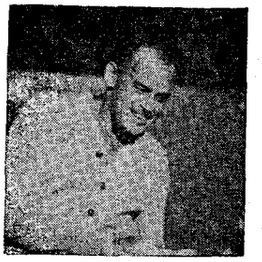

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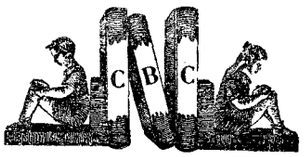

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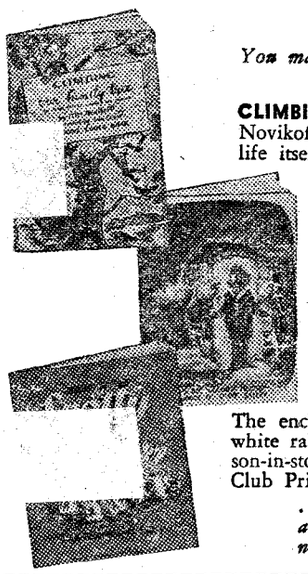

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